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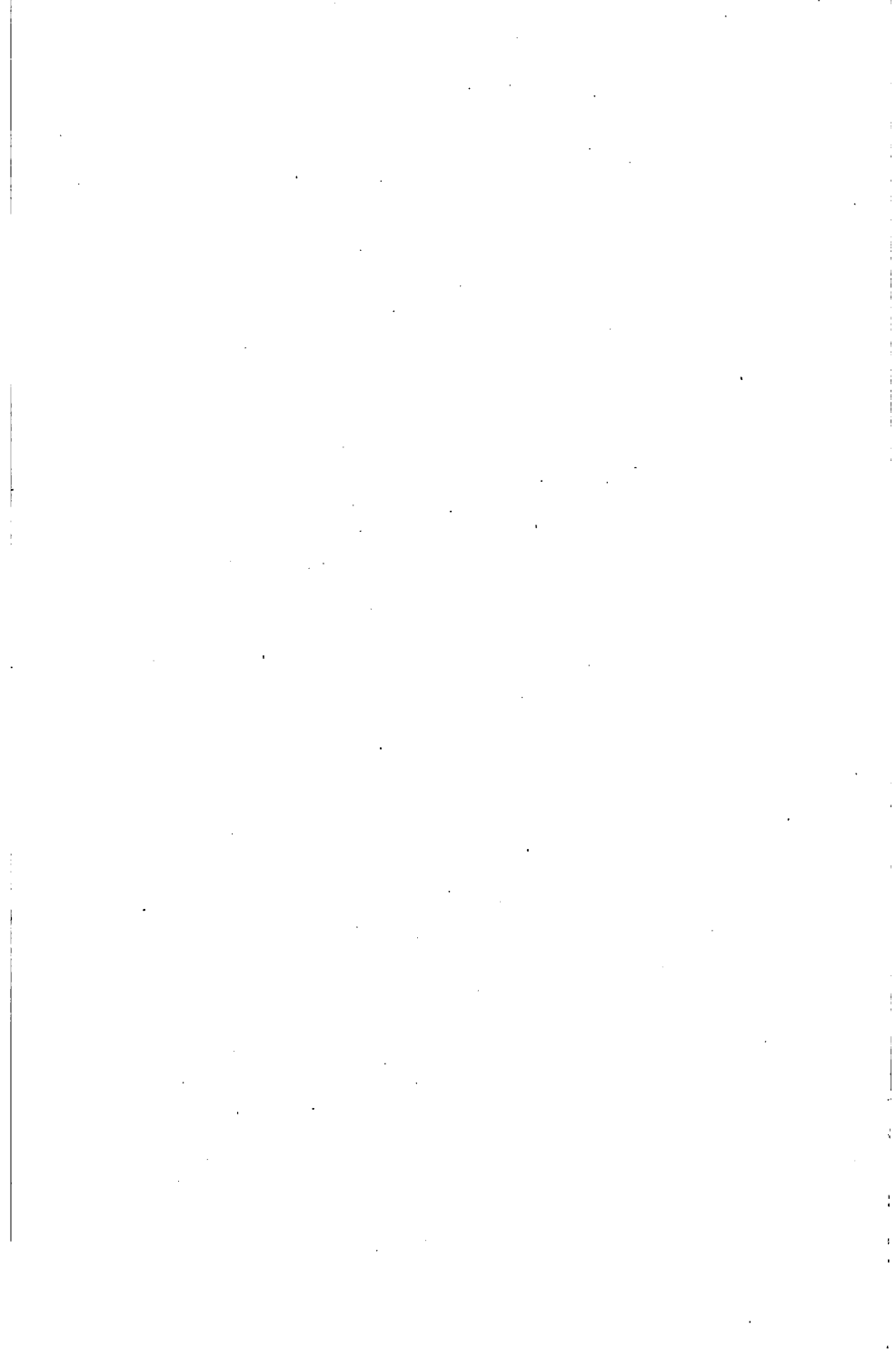
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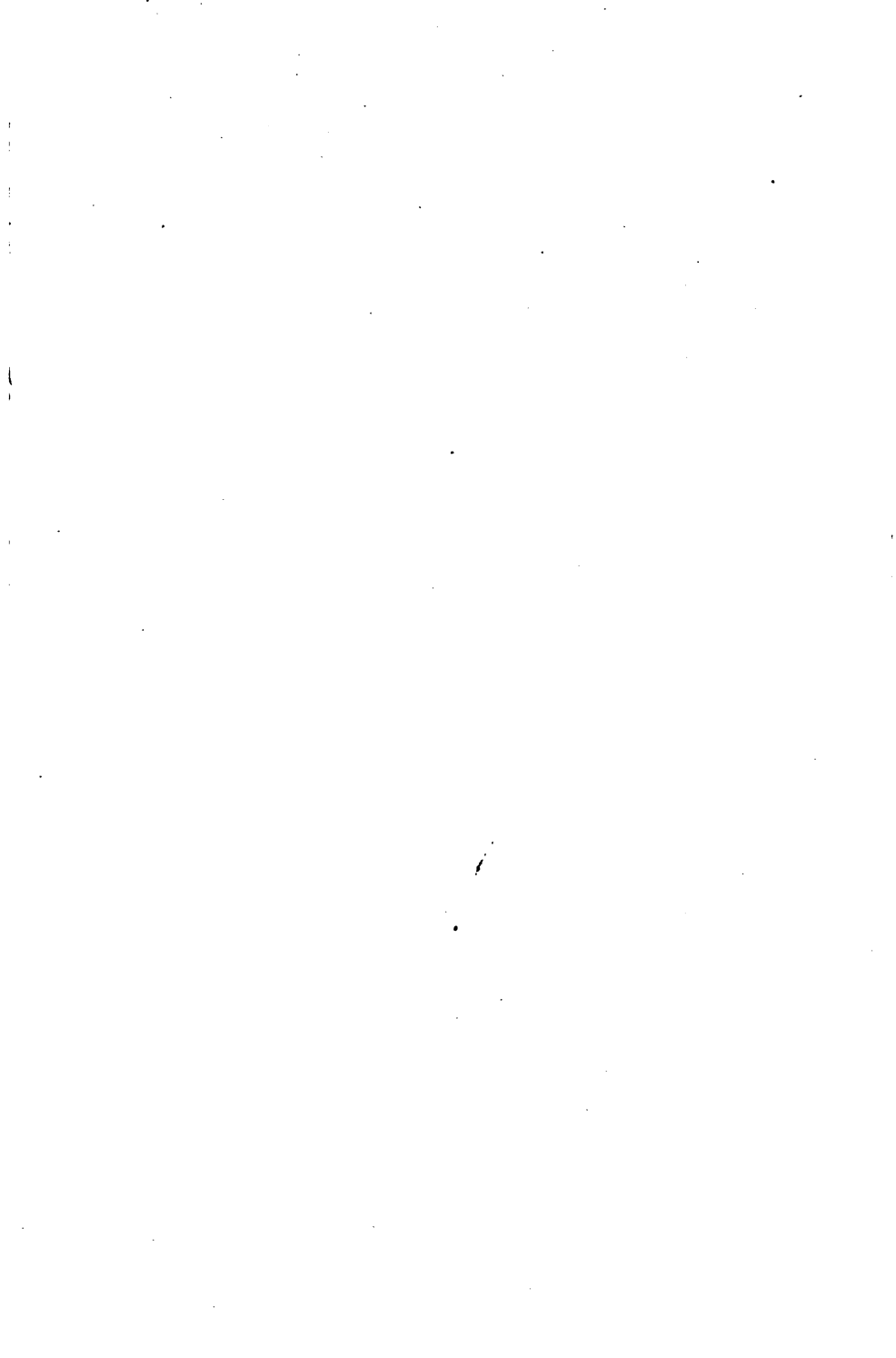
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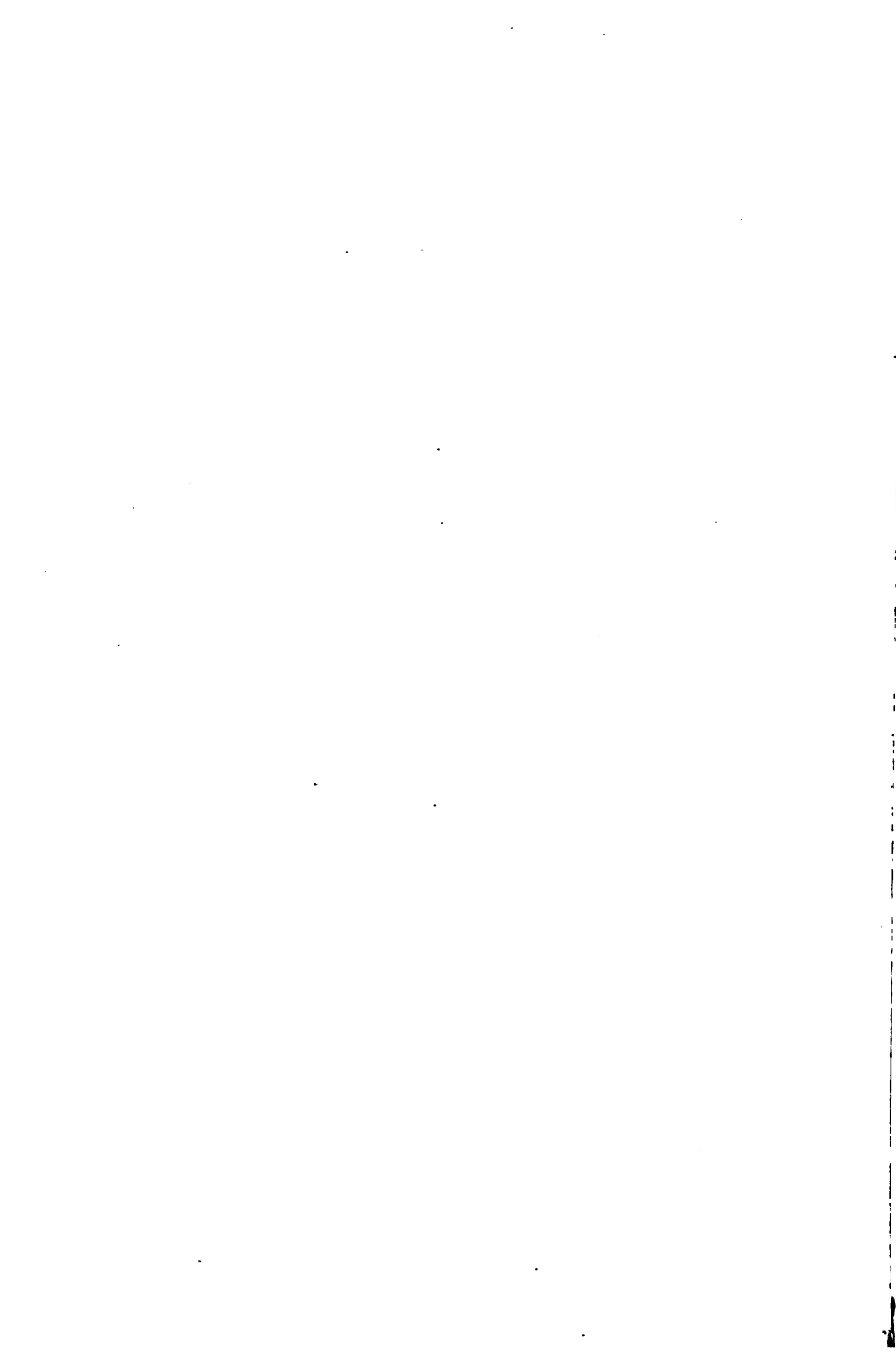
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**THE**

**ELEMENTS OF ETHICS**

**BY**

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TO  
MY FATHER  
THIS  
BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY  
DEDICATED



## PREFACE

THE present work is designed as an introductory treatise upon the fundamental problems of theoretical ethics, and therefore to obtain standing ground from which to consider the practical questions that are affected by general principles. The book may seem rather an elaborate treatise for an introduction, but so great are the complications of ethical problems, so manifold are their interests, and so various have been opinions regarding them, that a writer to-day must choose between the perfunctory task of producing a mere syllabus of words and the more important duty of saying enough to satisfy the wants of those who desire more than platitudes, and who wish some insight into the complexities of the case. The analysis of various questions has been made as complete as reasonable limits would allow, with the special purpose of trying to throw some light on the perplexities of ethical theories, and to present the author's conclusions regarding them. This purpose has involved a very exhaustive application of the analytic method, which may try the patience of those who desire synthetic and comprehensive results. But the writer is convinced that we shall never get out of the wilderness of scholastic controversy and see-sawing with traditional theories until the analytic method is first carefully applied and our exact whereabouts determined. We may then give a synthetic survey of the field without embroiling ourselves in the hocus-pocus of endless and futile discussions about words that may have a thousand meanings.

A long chapter has been given on the origin and development of ethical problems, which is nothing more than a brief history of the principal ethical theories and opinions of the past, beginning with the period immediately preceding Socrates. It

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has been given as a preliminary step to the right understanding of present questions and their complexity. Present ethical reflection is the accumulated heritage of the past, and only the historical method can at the same time show us the richness of that bequest and the multiplicity of its elements. It is hoped, therefore, that the chapter will be a timely contribution for the use of teachers who appreciate the value of that method and wish such a survey as introductory to present-day discussion.

I make no apologies for the elaborate treatment of the freedom of the will, though the tendencies to determinism by general writers, and the indifference of many to both sides, might be an excuse for ignoring it altogether. But the importance of the question to ethics is so great that no one can neglect it except such as coquet with determinism without analyzing their conceptions, and yet endeavor to perform the contradictory task of constructing a system of ethics. The amount of intellectual confusion on this subject by both sides of the discussion is simply amazing. All are, perhaps, agreed that the question is one regarding the possibility of alternative choice, but many of the arguments pro and con are wholly irrelevant to it, while few writers adequately reckon with the equivocations of the terms "determinism," "cause," and "freedom." This lengthy chapter, therefore, is an attempt to fully analyze the whole problem, to present a solution of it, to conciliate controversy, to fix the meaning and interest of freedom for ethics, and to obtain a position regarding it where discussion is not a logomachy and a sheer waste of time.

Other subjects receive the same kind of analysis, and must speak for themselves. I shall simply call attention to the analysis of conscience, the treatment of reason and desire, and of the relations between impulse, instinct, and reason, as attempts to secure a way out of much confusion in different writers. Of my success I am probably not a judge.

One thing, perhaps, will annoy some readers and critics, especially if they have mastered elementary principles. This is the fact of much real or apparent repetition. This, however, has

been deliberate. The writer's experience with beginners has been that he must repeat certain fundamental conceptions over and over again at different places and at different points of view in order that the key to ethical problems may not be buried under a mass of matter in which it would not be easily discovered. Students must have emphasis and variation or they lose the point at issue. This is the reason that condensation has been forced to give way to the necessities of pedagogical purpose.

I am under great obligations to Dr. Norman Wilde for reading the proofs and for occasional suggestions as the book passed through the press. My other debts of gratitude are distributed rather equally over too many writers on ethics to make any specific acknowledgments for their share in the result.

JAMES H. HYSLOP.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE, December 4, 1894.



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# ELEMENTS OF ETHICS

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION

*I. DEFINITION.*—1st. The term "Ethics" is derived from the Greek word  $\eta\theta\omicron\varsigma$ , which denotes "custom," "manners," "morals," and finds its equivalent in the Latin "mores," from which the English "moral" is derived. The term  $\eta\theta\omicron\varsigma$  again is a modified form of  $\epsilon\theta\omicron\varsigma$ , which denotes "habit," "usage," or the practice of social life. The difference between the two terms was probably very slight. However this may be they expressed everything that the body politic of Graeco-Roman life would denote by social obligation and practice. This was, then, originally the comprehensive content of investigation whenever this branch of philosophy was considered. In the process of time the term was somewhat narrowed, until it came to denote almost exclusively that branch of study which occupied itself with the nature, disposition and actions of the individual, and hence turned the interests of social life over to Politics.

2d. Logically, Ethics must be defined as both a science and an art. In so far as it is a name for the observation, classification and explanation of certain phenomena, it is a science; in so far as it attempts to regulate and to influence human action by instruction, admonition or advice, it is an art. Hence we may define it as *the science of the phenomena of human character and conduct, and the art of directing the human will toward the ideal order of life*. This twofold nature of the subject is the basis of the division into theoretical and practical Ethics, and illustrates many of the complexities of the subject. Considered

merely as a science, also, it treats of two distinct classes of phenomena, namely, those of the will and those of the world, in so far as they represent virtue and the good, or a desirable order of things and events affecting the welfare of man. The distinction between these will be considered in its place. For the present, and for the sake of brevity, we may consider it as embodied in the terms character and conduct, which may represent the mental condition on the one hand, and the external actions on the other, which make up the complex idea of morality. The phenomena of human character are the tastes, disposition, desires and aversions, affections, motives, and all mental conditions related to the fixed or changeable nature of the will. The phenomena of conduct are man's volitions and actions, comprehending all forms of behavior affecting his own and the welfare of others. Both together constitute the subject matter of Ethics, and they are always supplemented by a more or less direct reference to the nature and influence of the physical universe upon man as a moral agent. All such facts and forces have to be reckoned with in the regulation of conduct, and hence cannot escape the notice of Ethics.

3d. There are several current definitions of the subject which should receive a passing notice, and this for the large amount of light they help to throw upon the nature and comprehensiveness of Ethics. They are largely affected by the intellectual and social conditions under which they were first formed, or by the peculiar views of the philosophers who proposed them, as perhaps must always be the case. But they present an interesting analysis of the whole subject, so that we can regard each separate aspect of ethical problems as they were conceived at different times and by different persons. Some of these various definitions are substantially the following: "The science of right and wrong," "the science of duty," "the science of the good, or the *summum bonum*," "the science of man's moral nature," "the science of conduct," "the science of the conditions of morality," "the science of moral principles," "the science of social obligation," *et cetera*.

These various conceptions of the subject do not differ essentially from the definition we have adopted, unless it be in respect of scope and clearness. All of them include at least a part of the field covered by our own, but some are narrower, and some represent a different point of view. For instance, Ethics, as "the science of man's moral nature," is the conception common to English thought during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the discussion of moral questions was almost wholly psychological, and when men were concerned with the problem whether a man's individual conscience was the product of his experience or a natural endowment. Ethics has a profound interest in this question, but it is not the whole nor the most important part of its field. Again, Ethics, as "the science of conduct," may not take sufficient account of the fact that a matter of important interest to students and practical men alike is the relation of motives and character to conduct. In reality we are quite as much concerned with all those elements in the man that make him an object of admiration, of praise, and of approval, as we are in his actions, and hence we cannot help thinking that Ethics is quite as much a study of character as it is of conduct. A similar limitation must be imposed upon the conception of Ethics as "the science of the *summum bonum*," which denotes the highest or the ultimate end of man's conduct. It is this undoubtedly, but it is also more at the same time. It is the science of all the conditions leading to this end, and in fact is much more concerned with the person seeking such an end than with the result obtained by any other agency. This is the reason that we think of morality as representing, first, qualities of character and will, and, second, as the actions preserving and promoting social order. By supplementing the defects, therefore, of each traditional definition by the excellences of the other, we obtain a complete account of the complex subject with which we have to deal. Hence, we have chosen to represent it as occupied equally with persons and with things; with persons as the agents in realizing an ideal order of social action, and with things and conduct as conditions and elements in such an order. For this reason we



regard Ethics as the science of moral personality and of moral good, or end, one representing the subject's and the other the object's character.

**II. CHARACTERISTICS OF ETHICS.**—The formal definition of Ethics does not manifest all of its distinctive characteristics. It merely draws a general boundary line between Ethics and other sciences. But there are several features of it which still more clearly mark its nature and help us to understand its meaning.

**1st. Ethics is a Science of Values.**—It is, therefore, occupied with what we choose to call the *good* as contrasted with the merely *true*. Not that it can ignore, or leave unnoticed the field of truth, but that the mere truth about the general phenomena of nature and man is not its chief object. The truth with which it is mainly concerned is that about the good. The good is the object of desire, truth is the object of the intellect. In contrast with fine art also its object is this good as opposed to mere beauty. But it may take up both truth and beauty as goods, and in that way establish a close relation between itself and other forms of activity. It will not be interested in them, however, for their own sake, but as means to the development and perfection of man. And again it does not look at facts and events with their causes merely as such. It seeks to compare them and to distinguish their relative worth to man and his aims or his destiny. Hence Lotze delighted to say that its field was the *world of worths* as contrasted with the *world of facts and laws* of the physical sciences. It does not matter what form we give this world of values: it may be pleasure, happiness, welfare, perfection, obedience to the moral law for its own sake, love of God, or any other end. It nevertheless represents a function quite distinct from the so-called static and dynamic sciences. They take facts as they are and try to determine their laws and their causes. They consider them as effects to be explained by antecedent facts. They do not care for their worth to mankind. But ethics must reduce them to a scale of values, and assuming that man is able to modify the forces of nature, must indicate

those particular facts and objects which have the greater value to man. Honesty, veracity, chastity, politeness, friendship, justice, and all the virtues represent the sense of value which we impose upon certain courses of conduct as compared with their opposites, and this without regard to the mode of *explaining* such phenomena. Hence, besides looking at facts as events in the world, Ethics looks at their worth with a view either to adjusting them in the future to man's development, or to his own adjustment to them. Ethics thus acts as a judge over the world's order rather than as a mere observer of it.

**2d. Ethics is the Science of the Ideal as Contrasted with the Actual.**—This characteristic or function is closely allied to the previous one. The sense of worth or value is a condition both of perceiving and realizing the ideal. By the ideal we mean a better state of being or existence than we feel has actually been realized. Thus, we think that a better condition of justice, a greater degree of equality, a higher development of civic virtue might exist than actually does exist. We may see about us a bad, or even the worst possible world where vice and sin reign supreme, and yet conceive and long for a purer and more perfect order. This is conceiving the ideal. Now we must first be able to realize the sense of value before we shall be conscious of an ideal. But in distinguishing values we may not go beyond the actual order of the world. We may only decide the scale of preference between events as they occur. But to idealize a world is to set up a possible state of existence, perhaps wholly in contrast with the present, which it is sought to realize by individual or social effort. The physical sciences do nothing of the kind. They explain facts, and do not form ideals or endeavor to move the will in the direction of them. The chief function of Ethics is to do this, to determine what is an ideal existence, and to promote its realization.

Another way of presenting the same distinction is that Ethics treats of what *ought* to be, not what *is*. This is only another statement for the idea that actual existence can never be made an object of duty unless it can be idealized. Then so far as

events are not produced by our own wills we can be only spectators of them. We cannot say that they ought to be realized in any other sense than that they would be desirable. But so far as what is represents only actual or past events, it is merely a subject for explanation, and we cannot say that it ought to be anything else: for to say that a thing *ought* to be implies, so far as it is ethical at all, that it is still to be realized. Hence when Ethics deals with what ought to be, it is conceiving an ideal event or world which it aims to realize by urging the obligation and the possibility of doing so. No other science does this. They content themselves within the limits of actual facts, and lay down no laws, while Ethics, starting with the world of facts goes on to assert the existence of ideal possibilities and to maintain the obligation to realize them. Hume remarked this distinction between the physical and the moral sciences, and it is one of great significance. It determines a difference both of method and of matter between them, giving the moral sciences a complexity of function which belongs to no other.

**3d. Ethics is a Legislative or a Normative Science.**—Not only does Ethics distinguish between values, and form ideals, but it imposes an obligation to respect them. This obligation is the sense of duty, or Kant's "categorical imperative." This function of it follows directly upon the other two. There is no use to feel the worth of a certain order or to idealize it, if we cannot feel that it ought to be realized. The fact that there are certain ends, such as perfection, goodness, happiness, or honesty, temperance, purity, and the like, which we can and do feel we ought to aim at, attests the existence of a phenomenon of great importance to moral science. Under that conception we study what ought to be, and then lay down its pursuit as a binding law upon our natures. Just as Logic, therefore, prescribes rules for correct thinking, Ethics prescribes rules for correct conduct. It *legislates* for the will, while other sciences *explain* for the intellect. It is this characteristic of it which marks the transition to Ethics as an art, and which distinguishes its method and its object so radically from the natural sciences. In

fact, the distinction once common between "natural" and "moral" science was partly founded upon this peculiar characteristic of Ethics. It means that, besides knowing how man *does* act, we require to indicate how he *ought* to act, and what end he *ought* to pursue. It, therefore, seeks to develop and to formulate either the respect for virtue or the constraint that serves to regulate the human will and to determine the choice of ends and actions most consistent with man's highest welfare. It is a normative science, therefore, because it endeavors to ascertain the norms, rules or maxims which formulate the right and wrong modes of conduct, and which are the indispensable conditions to the rationality of actions as causes are indispensable to the rationality of events.

**III. RELATION OF ETHICS TO SPECIAL SCIENCES.**—It is essential to a complete definition of Ethics that we consider at least briefly its relations to certain special sciences. We have compared it with the natural sciences in general and distinguished it as a normative science, and thus contrasted its functions with those of the purely causal sciences. But it sustains a peculiar relation either of connection, resemblance, or contrast, to several special sciences—a relation which helps to define its meaning and content more clearly. These particular sciences are Psychology, Logic, *Æ*sthetics, Politics and Metaphysics. Others might be included, but they are not so important for our present purposes, and hence may be omitted.

**1st. Relation to Psychology.**—Psychology and Ethics are closely related, but may also be sharply distinguished. Thus Psychology is the science of the phenomena of consciousness, and Ethics is also a science of a certain portion of those phenomena with their relation to, or issue in, conduct. But both the extent of the field and the object, as well as the method of the two sciences, are different. Psychology endeavors to show how any or all of our mental phenomena come to happen. It does not say whether they are true or right. It investigates only their laws and causes. Hence, its proper functions are observation, classification and explanation of mental events,

including cognition, memory, association, reasoning, emotion, choice, volition, and subordinate phenomena. But Ethics does not investigate certain divisions of these at all, and does not investigate any of them in the same way, or with the same purpose as psychology; it wholly excludes cognition, memory, association and reasoning from its domain, and even when it includes the phenomena of emotion and will in its sphere, it does so without any reference to explaining them, but with a view to estimating their value and relation to moral development. In brief, Psychology is explanatory, Ethics is legislative. Ethics undoubtedly is conditioned by Psychology—that is, it assumes the laws of mind and will utilize them for its own object, but it will not investigate or determine them, its chief function being to deal on the one hand with those ideals of the intellect which determine the difference between good and bad, right and wrong, and on the other with the problems of volition and obligation as determining whether a man can and ought to aim at the moral development of himself and others. It is thus very sharply distinguished from Psychology, while in a measure depending upon it and occupied in part with the same phenomena.

**2d. Relation to Logic.**—Logic is also occupied with mental phenomena, but with a more restricted field of them than Psychology, and with an object different alike from Psychology and Ethics. Logic is occupied only with the phenomena of thought and inference or reasoning. It thus excludes all direct concern with the primary faculties and phenomena of intelligence, and also those of emotion and volition. But even when it considers those of reasoning, it makes no attempt to explain them. It shows those which are valid, and those that are not valid. In other words, it is the science of the formal laws of thought, or the laws of correct thinking. Its function has thus a close connection with that of Ethics, only it is occupied with reasoning, while Ethics is occupied with volition or conduct. Logic deals with the ideals of the intellect, and so establishes the laws by which we do and *must* reason if we think correctly. Ethics deals with the ideals of the will, and so establishes the laws by which we do or *ought*

to act, if we act rightly. Logic employs the understanding; Ethics employs the conscience—one the logical, the other the moral reason. Furthermore, Logic seems to impose certain obligations, and in this respect resembles Ethics. But the obligations are not to obey the laws of thought, for we must obey them whether we will or not. Its obligations or duties, however, are to see that, when we do think, the special contents of thought conform to those laws. The obligations of Ethics, on the other hand, assume that we can disobey conscience, that we are free to do or not to do, as we please. The laws of Logic are the *necessary* laws of reason; those of Ethics are the *moral* laws of the will. In the former case the “laws” are statements of the uniformity of actual phenomena, in the latter the “laws” are injunctions to realize ideal phenomena. Both of them, however, discuss the laws of correct action—one the correct action of thought, the other of volition. Both determine what is valid, but Logic determines what is valid in reasoning, Ethics what is valid in conduct.

**3d. Relation to Aesthetics.**—The relation between Aesthetics and Ethics is also a close one. Aesthetics is the science of the laws of beauty, and defines the sphere of the fine arts. Its psychological field is the emotions, and these are the phenomena that connect the subject with Ethics. Aesthetics estimates values, but they are the values of art objects, of those objects which appeal to the sense of beauty. It is not a science of personal worth, or of conduct, not even of what is called moral beauty, which is an expression borrowed by analogy from art to indicate the satisfaction we feel in the presence of moral perfections. But its sole object is impersonal worth in terms of beauty as opposed to utility, which is rather the object of economics. Ethics, on the other hand, is occupied with personal worth as expressed in perfection of will and conduct. Virtue as opposed to both beauty and utility is its object. Both sciences, however, depend upon the same emotions and idealizing instincts, and are so closely connected in this respect that cultivation of the one affects results of the other, though one cannot be a substitute for

the other in its effects on the character. Aesthetics aids moralization, but is not its equivalent. Ethics purifies art, but will not produce it.

**4th. Relation to Politics.**—The relation between Ethics and Politics is closer than in any other case. Both sciences have to deal with human action and institutions, and thus seem to be occupied with the same field. But the distinction between them is clear in spite of this fact. Ethics in its broadest sense comprehends Politics, because whatever Politics adopts must first be granted in the court of Ethics. But in its narrower sense it is co-ordinate with it. These facts make Ethics in its more comprehensive import co-extensive with Sociology; in its restricted import a co-ordinate species with Politics. The definition or each will make the relation clear. Politics is generally defined as the science of government. This comprehends all the institutions and laws that are instrumental in the regulation of men's conduct toward each other. But for the sake of an effective comparison with Ethics it should be defined as the science of the regulation and restriction of human conduct by law. It thus seeks to determine how certain courses of action may be artificially induced or prevented. It aims by law to establish social order, or a condition of things which the unorganized wills of men would not spontaneously produce. It is, therefore, the science of the artificial limitations of human liberty in the protection of rights and the regulation of *external* conduct. On the other hand, Ethics is the science of what a man can and *ought* to do, whether government exists or not. It determines the justice and validity of all political principles, but it does not investigate the means of putting them into force. It is, therefore, concerned with the phenomena of free action, or the voluntary choice of the good. Hence, in contrast with Politics, it may be defined as the science of the extension of human liberty, or of those conditions under which morality is realized without a resort to civil law. For this reason it is strictly the science of the conditions under which morality becomes *internal* as well as external. Politics stops short with the attainment of external good, an order

in which free morality is possible, though it does not and cannot effect this morality. Ethics aims with this to attain *internal* good or virtue, and consequently is concerned with the "good will" as well as with good conduct *externally* considered. But it deals with morality only as it is a product of free will, while Politics subordinates freedom to the attainment of social order.

The general position of Ethics in relation to the sciences which pertain to man is apparent from the following tabular view which begins with Anthropology as the most comprehensive term for the knowledge of man. Sociology appears in it as the general science of all customs, habits, institutions and conduct affecting his development, in so far as they are moral and social products of the will :

Anthropology	Physiology	{ Structural. Functional.
	Psychology	{ Empirical. Metaphysical.
	Aesthetics	{ Painting. Sculpture. Music. Architecture.
	Sociology	{ History. Politics. Economics. Ethics.

Aesthetics also deals with products of the will, but the object is not immediately moral. Its subdivisions represent those products which appeal to taste or the sense of beauty, not to conscience as the actions or disposition with which Ethics deals. The distinction then between Aesthetics and Sociology, though both deal with products of will, is that the former concerns material products affecting the artistic part of our nature, and the latter all actions and institutions affecting human welfare social and moral. Economics also represents products of will, but these are the material products necessary to subsistence, or at least having an exchangeable value determined by the cost of production. Hence it is the science of wealth. It treats of *utility values*, as Aesthetics treats of the artistic, and Ethics of



the moral values. The actions involved, however, like those of Politics, are subject to the jurisdiction and authority of Ethics, though in respect to object matter the several sciences can be classed as co-ordinate with each other.

**5th. Relation to Metaphysics.**—The connection between Ethics and Metaphysics is not so close as between Ethics and Politics. The reason for this is that they are not co-ordinate sciences. Metaphysics is the science of the *nature* of reality as contrasted with the *laws* of phenomena. It thus, in a measure at least, conditions the complete results of all sciences, and so of Ethics among them. But these sciences simply assume the ultimate principles of Metaphysics without so much as defining, investigating or validating them. In Ethics we take for granted that there is some reality besides the mere phenomena whose laws and value we study, but we do not investigate its nature by ethical methods. But if the possibility of Ethics, as a science, of other than purely natural phenomena, or necessarily determined events, is raised, we must go to Metaphysics to decide the matter, and in this respect Ethics is closely dependent upon Metaphysics. But for the facts and for the value of moral phenomena, Ethics is wholly independent of metaphysical inquiry, and can go about determining the laws and duties of moral life, and the validity of moral principles, without first solving any of the metaphysical problems of reality. But when certain controversies are raised, such as the freedom of the will, the nature of consciousness, the relation of materialism to moral theories, the solution of them must be deferred to Metaphysics. This shows that the two sciences may insensibly run into each other, although for practical purposes they may be kept distinct.

**6th. Relation to the Physical Sciences.**—The relation is not close in these cases. Both the method and the object matter of the physical and moral sciences are different. All the physical sciences treat of natural phenomena, and their causes as opposed to phenomena of will and their value. But Ethics cannot dispense with their conclusions. It is interested in the laws of nature and the results of physical science as limitations upon

arbitrary conduct and as conditions of right adjustment. But it does not deal with them as representing the ideal order of things to be realized by the human will. It merely assumes them and endeavors to establish an order independent, but not in conflict with them. Hence, while all the sciences may be tributary to Ethics in respect to results, this is neither their direct object nor the principal field of Ethics. Its primary object is wholly independent of them in as much as it determines what ought to be in contrast with what merely is or occurs without volitional interposition.

**7th. Relation to Religion.**—The relation between Ethics, or, rather, morality and religion, is not easy to determine in a brief discussion. The subject is a very complex one, and must be deferred for treatment in a separate chapter. It is sufficient to remark at present that in some respects they are very closely related, and in others they are wholly distinct and independent of each other. This will be brought out when the subject is more fully discussed in a later chapter.

**IV. DIVISIONS OF ETHICS.**—The general division of Ethics is into *Theoretical* and *Practical*. This is made according to the distinction between its explanatory and its legislative or normative functions. While the subject is, in general, distinguished from the physical and historical sciences by its normative or regulative functions, it is also connected with them in having a field for the application of explanatory methods. That is to say, there are phenomena in the field of Ethics which require to be analyzed and explained, or reduced to logical and scientific order. Hence, we have the theoretical function of the science concerned with the nature, relations and value of the ideal. On the other hand, Ethics does not stop with explanation of these. It goes on to lay down obligations, laws or maxims for the regulation of conduct, and to prescribe the means of attaining the ends recognized by theoretical Ethics. Consequently there is the division of practical Ethics. Theoretical Ethics employs the explanatory or scientific method; practical Ethics, the normative or regulative method.

**V. SCOPE OF ETHICS.**—The division of Ethics into theoretical and practical, defines, in a general way, the scope of the subject. But it does not present the particular conceptions with which it has to deal, nor the problems which it is expected to solve. In order, therefore, to understand the many questions which Ethics has to answer, we must call attention to the range of phenomena that come, more or less directly and indirectly, under its notice.

**1st. Man's Moral Nature.**—Some psychological analysis is always preliminary to the study of Ethics, or is assumed in it, and it often requires to be considered for other purposes than explaining its phenomena. Hence, before laying down any rules for conduct, we must know something of the nature of the being to which those rules appeal. This moral nature consists of all the mental capacities and phenomena which are essentially connected with conduct. These are judgment, conscience, emotion, desire and volition, with subordinate phenomena, and they represent the psychology of Ethics. All of these come under notice in determining the meaning and contents of what is called moral.

**2d. The Genesis of Moral Ideas and Faculties.**—Besides the nature of moral phenomena, we are interested in their *origin*. This is the evolutionistic problem, or the application of the theory of development to morality and moral faculties. It includes all the various influences—physical, political, religious and social—that have been brought to bear upon man's conduct and the formation of his character. These influences are summarized in the notion of environment, which expresses a whole group of external agencies limiting and determining man's nature and conduct. In the development of man and his morality, we have to look at his whole history and the external forces affecting his will. But while these have much to do with the particular codes of rules he has adopted, they do not represent all that the ethical problem desires to solve. They only serve to show and to explain the wide divergence of conceptions in regard to morality, or the inequalities of men in their moral

development. But the problem of genesis is nevertheless one of the most important in Ethics.

**3d. The Validity of Moral Principles.**—Independently of the problem of the genesis of morality comes the validity of its rules and injunctions. This validity of a moral principle does not rest upon the manner in which it came to be recognized, upon its origin, but upon its use in the economy of the world. In fact, the most important function of Ethics is to determine this characteristic of a moral maxim, to justify it, to show that it holds good whatever the accidents of its historical origin. Thus, besides learning how respect for life, respect for property, chastity, honesty, temperance, came to be recognized as obligatory, we wish to know the ultimate ground upon which they rest, and this takes us beyond all questions of history and origin, and requires us to ascertain the relation between the conduct or attitude of will prescribed and the ultimate end which mankind are enjoined to realize.

**4th. The Determination of the Good.**—Man, in so far as he is a rational or intelligent being at all, always acts with reference to some end. This end is called his good, or what he would regard as such. But he is always supposed to have one ultimate end or good to which he subordinates all others. This is called his highest good, or *summum bonum*. Hence, Ethics must study the highest end which men actually seek; and if this comes short of the ideal good for all persons, it must determine the good which ought to be sought. The object in determining this fact is to provide a criterion for measuring the worth of a man's conduct. As a man's ultimate purpose in life, so is his conduct. If one is good, other things being equal, the other is good, and *vice versa*, and as Ethics is supremely interested in the merits and demerits of conduct, it must determine the nature of the Highest Good, or the ideal object for man's pursuit. This may be called the *objective* problem of Ethics.

**5th. The Explanation of Virtue.**—This, in contrast with the previous question, may be called the *subjective* problem of Ethics. Not only do we judge conduct by its relation to the ideal or the

good, but also by the manner or motive with which it is performed. We want to know not only the fact that a man adjusts himself to environment, or conforms to the rule of the good as an end, but also that he will do this without regard to the compelling influence of circumstances, that he makes this the voluntary end of life. Hence, Ethics is concerned in more than *external* conformity to its rules. It not only wants to see honesty, veracity, temperance, obedience to the law practiced, but it wants to see them respected and obeyed without the need of appealing to force, or merely selfish interests to realize them. Ethics wishes also to assert and maintain the importance of the "good will," the disposition to pursue the good rationally and without regard to the changes of circumstances and exemption from police vigilance. It is, therefore, occupied with the phenomena of character, and endeavors to determine the constituent elements of virtue as distinguished from merely objective good.

**6th. The Determination of Specific Duties.**—This is particularly the function of practical Ethics, which especially investigates the *means*, as theoretical Ethics determines the *end*, of conduct. It thus classifies the various forms of virtue and good which it is sought to realize. The highest good and virtue are not always to be attained in the same way. There are various relations in life that require express formulation of the moral law to suit a certain group of phenomena. Thus, it is necessary to recognize the nature and distinction between justice and benevolence, the nature and obligations of veracity, honesty, chastity. The various relations and conditions of life which involve these virtues, the individual, the family, and society, all come under investigation as determining for us certain specific duties, and measuring our obligation to fulfil them. Besides there will be the questions concerning the proper and effective method of influencing the human will, the educational and social agencies necessary to perfect character, and all institutions that are helpful to the practice of virtue. In this field, then, Ethics will investigate the ground of specific duties, as distinct from the

general principle of morality, and the motive forces for insuring their fulfilment.

*VI. SUMMARY.*—In this introductory discussion we have ascertained that Ethics is a science of character and of conduct, of good will and good results in human action. Its chief characteristics are that it investigates what is man's highest good, and that it tries to ascertain the principles upon which this can be rationally pursued while exercising the functions of a normative or regulative science and art. Lastly, we found that it is very closely related to several other sciences, and is occupied with all the problems of man's moral nature, its genesis, meaning and value or authority, conscience, the good, virtue, freedom, duty, and whatever is contained in a moral ideal.

*References.*—For the nature of Ethics the following books may be consulted: Mackenzie: *Manual of Ethics*, Chapter I.; Bowne: *Principles of Ethics*, Introduction; Martineau: *Types of Ethical Theory*, First and Second Prefaces. Second Edition; Schurman: *The Ethical Import of Darwinism*, Chapter I.; Porter: *Elements of Moral Science*, Introduction, pp. 1-17; Alexander (S): *Moral Order and Progress*, Introduction, pp. 1-19.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF ETHICAL PROBLEMS

*INTRODUCTORY.*—Reflection upon the nature and obligation of morality began as early, or nearly as early, as speculation upon the universe. In fact it is difficult to keep the two modes of thinking apart from each other. Man has as much natural interest in his practical relation to the world or to a Supreme Being, and the limitations which these agencies may impose upon his will as he has curiosity about the causes of things. He will always, therefore, associate reflection upon his conduct with reflection upon the nature of things. In a very large measure what he thinks about his duties, what they are in particular, will be determined by the opinions he maintains about the universe and his destiny in it. Even if he wishes for certain purposes to keep these two phases of thought apart from each other, he will find that he cannot wholly effect this result, but that his ideas of morality are either directly or indirectly molded by his ultimate views about the world and its meaning for him. This tendency very early gave rise to ethical reflection, and even the earliest philosophers, whose opinions it is safe to suppose were not mere myths, are accredited with many wise saws about the duties of man. These proverbs cling to their persons and history as a part of their philosophic opinions, and indicate the same origin for ethical as for metaphysical speculation. But there is not time or space to discuss this matter in a brief outline of its history, and we can only allude to it while characterizing the first period of moral reflection which we have to notice as laying down the line of all subsequent speculations upon moral problems. We may conveniently adopt the usual division of periods into *Ancient*, *Mediæval* and *Modern*. Each of

these represents a typical mode of thought, determining the ideals and codes of Ethics applicable to its time.

*I. ANCIENT ETHICS.*—This will comprise the period and characteristics of Greek thought. The one characteristic of this whole period, so far as it affected the moral consciousness of Greece, was the overwhelming sense of subjection to power, and the necessity of conforming to its laws while longing for freedom or exemption from the penalties which that power could inflict for resistance to it. Religious and philosophic speculation, aided by the reflex influence from the necessity of strong government, emphasized man's subordination to supreme powers, which were either conceived as impersonal, or as wholly divested of a benevolent interest in the world. This state of mind favored ethical codes based upon fear or obedience, with as little respect as possible for the power to be obeyed. On the other hand, the struggle for political freedom, with its ideals, re-acted upon the speculative conception, and encouraged a certain measure of libertinism in the individual, and expressed the natural desire to be emancipated from the restrictions of law, which was in reality only the obverse side of the absolutism at the basis of both philosophy and politics. Fate and Nemesis were thus one side of Greek moral consciousness, and libertinism the other. Both are reflected very clearly in the drama, and mark the two types of character, the ascetic and his opposite, which are reflected in Greek speculative Ethics. This period again is subdivided into several subordinate tendencies according as one or the other aspect of it predominated. They will be considered briefly in their order.

**1st. The Pre-Socratic Period.**—The first stage of this period was the *religious*, and it merged into the philosophic without changing the conception of man's relation to the world. The religious attitude of mind, however, was the general one, and gave the whole period its prevailing tone. This was that the customs and laws binding on men were the decrees of the gods. In philosophic parlance these were the laws of nature, in so far as they represented the fixed conditions to which it was necessary



to conform one's life. But the religious mind and political interests placed its last defence of existing codes of conduct in the will of the gods. This was the divine will theory of moral obligation. But two influences served to weaken all the pre-suppositions of such a view. They were, first, the unideal character of the gods, and second, the rise of scepticism in regard to their existence. It was their unideal character that gave the sting to scepticism. But in criticising the religious conception, with its doctrine of arbitrary power, the sceptical school based its attack mainly upon its doubts about the existence of the gods. It did not deny the possible relation between the gods and moral law, but cut up by the roots the fact of it on the ground that such powers did not exist. The force of their argument, however, rested chiefly upon the growing dissatisfaction with anthropomorphic polytheism, and prejudiced neither the philosophic conception of monotheism and pantheism, nor the purified conception of a more refined religious consciousness which endowed the divine with benevolence as well as power. But in connection with the low ideals of Greek life, the political struggle for liberty and the increasing scepticism of the age, the belief that the customs and laws, which were the moral rules of that age, were the expressed will of the gods, was dissolved. That was the negative work of the sophists and the sceptical school. But they were not content with mere destruction. They also presented a positive and constructive theory of morality as it was then understood. This consisted of two claims. First, that all law, moral and political, is *conventional*; and second, that the good which all men seek is *pleasure*. The first of these elements merely substituted the human for the divine will; the conception was the same as the theological view, but the source was different, and the one merit which it possessed was that it explained both the origin of *positive* law and custom, and the practice of Greek life in regard to its submission, up to that time at least, to power, whether aristocratic or democratic. But this radical doctrine offended both the religious and the undeveloped moral consciousness of the best minds,

and was the signal for a reconstruction. The second element indicated quite as radical a change in the point of view. The theological conception based morality upon external authority. Virtue in its conception consisted merely in obedience to the powers capable of making their will effective. Merit consisted in submission. But in making the good pleasure instead of conformity to power or authority, the change was from a theological to an anthropological point of view. It was the inception of an *internal authority*, but instead of expressing morality in terms of obedience, its sanction was found in the *end* sought by the agent. The subject, not the object, determined the course of action to be chosen. Hence, here began also the value of the doctrine of human liberty, which appears as a part of ethical doctrine in Aristotle. But the chief contribution to ethical doctrine, made by asserting that pleasure, is the good, was that conduct has its qualities determined by the end, or result aimed at by the will, though the Sophists would probably not have distinguished between the instinctive and the rational attainment of this end. They were satisfied with taking the good out of the hands of authority, though explaining positive law by convention, and placing the good in the object realized by the individual. This was the beginning of both the psychological and the utilitarian theories of morality.

**2d. The Socratic Period.**—This period of ethical reflection represents an entire departure from the doctrine that morality is the product of mere authority, human or divine—that is, a creation of will, and in its place substitutes the idea that the merit of conduct is in some way a part of the nature of things, and that it is determined wholly by the relations of the will to this as an end. Consequently the whole Socratic movement, involving Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, with their minor schools, starts with an analysis of human nature, the intention being to find in the individual man, not in the power of any one over him, the reasons or grounds of morality. Man's nature as a rational being was investigated, and the end prescribed by that nature or by reason was determined as the true ground for the merit of conduct.

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The period, therefore, represented the development of maturer ideas of human freedom, especially because the sentiment of authority was discredited. This was the effect of Sophistic doctrine, which sought only to explain, not to justify, customary morality by convention, and hence the next problem was to show either the rational ground upon which existing codes rested, or the ideal end which determined goodness independently of authority. This was found, according to the Socratic school, in an object of consciousness, cognizable by the subject, and not merely enforced action in conformity to the dictates of an arbitrary power. The main difference between this movement and that of the Sophists is found in two characteristics. The first of these was the abandonment of the sceptical spirit and method, and the second was the purification of the ideal represented in the reconstructive effort of the Sophists. There was a general tendency to abandon the idea of pleasure as the highest good, and to substitute for it either some other end, or to qualify it by wisdom, or the rational pursuit of the good. The movement, however, represents three different phases of development.

1. **SOCRATES AND THE MINOR SOCRATICS.**—The Sophists had claimed to be teachers of virtue, but this claim was accompanied by so much scepticism, by the cultivation of so much personal interest, and the want of due moral earnestness, that it did little or nothing to regenerate the moral consciousness of Greece. It was only a signal for the better spirits to take hold of the problem seriously. This more earnest attempt at reconstruction was begun by Socrates, and his character, life and death have placed him among the foremost of the great men of the world, and all because, besides doing much for scientific method, he aroused a strong interest in moral questions.

Socrates did not directly attack the ethical theories of the Sophists. He said nothing about the authority of the gods, nor did he have anything to say about the doctrine of convention. He merely turned the logic and dialectical method of scepticism upon itself, and while seeming to be mainly interested in a theory of knowledge, his illustrations and constant discussions about

virtue and the good, reinforced by conservative impulses against scepticism, stimulated an extraordinary amount of interest in ethical reflection. His theory about the nature of morality was rather a paradoxical one. He did not dispute the value of pleasure or happiness as the good, but, seeing the effects of its unbridled pursuit, sought to qualify it by making knowledge or wisdom the condition of attaining it. His whole ethical doctrine is summed up in two propositions, both of which were paradoxes even to the Greeks. They were (a) that no man is voluntarily bad, and (b) that virtue is wisdom. The difficulties occasioned by both of these notions grew out of the equivocations latent in the terms "voluntary" and "virtue," on which no stress can be laid here. But it is proper to remark the influence which they exercise upon subsequent thought. The controversies started by the first of these positions terminated in the distinction between *desire* and *will*, and between impulsive and deliberative or free conduct. The controversies about the second resulted in the distinction between *natural* and *moral* good or excellence. These distinctions, however, were not developed by Socrates. The boasting claims of the Sophists had disgusted him, because he saw, in spite of their conceit, that they did not know what they meant by justice, temperance, courage, about which they were forever disputing. He imagined, therefore, that they, with mankind at large, were prevented from being virtuous by not knowing what the good was. He imagined that every man would do the right if only he knew what it was. Hence he attributed all vice to ignorance. He seems to have made no account of the fact that men often deliberately choose what their moral judgment condemns. Undoubtedly he would have said of such persons that they did not really know their own good, but had mistaken it, though acting with reference to what they supposed it to be. It was this idea that made Socrates attribute all wrongdoing to a defect of knowledge, and hence he set about trying to define the nature of virtue. He demanded of the Sophists that they define what they meant by temperance, courage, justice, wisdom, etc., and their failure to make out a consistent account

of them was interpreted as proving both that they were ignorant of the subject about which they professed so much knowledge, and that this ignorance was the reason for their defective morality. He found them disposed to seek the good, if only they knew what it was, but hopelessly deceived in their knowledge of that good. Hence, he set about correcting men's conception of virtue as the first condition of moralizing them and announced his paradoxes with the view of maintaining that virtue could be taught. By this he actually meant that men could be taught what the good was, though this was not always what his fellow-thinkers understood by it. They began to feel the difference between a virtuous will and the attainment of the good, though they did not formulate it. Socrates did not realize the extent to which his own strength of character entered into his own choice of the good. He felt his defective knowledge, and always being ready to do what was right when he knew it, he imagined all others were like himself. He did not imagine that there were persons who did not wish to see or to know any other good than that which they were pursuing. Hence, he made all defects of character originate in ignorance and all virtue in wisdom, and so thought that the whole problem of morality lay in education. Thus he was not explaining the ground of virtue, but the means of realizing it. He merely emphasized the importance of morality sufficiently to induce among his admirers and disciples a scientific account of it.

There were three characteristics in Socrates which influenced his contemporaries in the formation of their ethical doctrines. They were (a) an intense conviction that wisdom or knowledge was the essential factor of virtue, (b) excellent self-control in the regulation of his own personal life and conduct, and (c) the tacit supposition that pleasure or happiness was the end which all men sought. The first of these represented his special doctrine, and the last two were personal traits of character and opinion. These three aspects of the man gave rise to as many schools which simply exaggerated the one principle they saw in their master. *First*, the Megarians thought that the good was not known, and that

the first problem for each man was to go in quest of it. For this reason they thought that knowledge or wisdom was the highest good, but went beyond mere knowledge of self to knowledge of the universe. They thus transcended their master's contempt for *Metaphysics*. *Second*, the Cyrenaics, perceiving that Socrates had a regard to pleasure in his conduct, maintained that virtue consisted in the rational pursuit of it. They admitted the importance of knowledge, but they thought that men had a better knowledge of what the good was than Socrates asserted. Hence, they maintained that virtue consisted, not in the quest and possession of wisdom, but in the right or rational application of it to conduct. Pleasure, and that of the present moment, was the good, and wisdom was necessary to choose correctly when and how it was to be obtained. *Third*, the Cynics admired in Socrates his self-control and independence of the pleasure of the moment, or rather of those impulses which lead a man blindly into wrongdoing. They agreed with him that speculative research into the nature of the good and of virtue was necessary to right conduct, but "they maintained that the Socratic wisdom, on the exercise of which man's well-being depended, was exhibited, not in the skillful pursuit, but in the rational disregard of pleasure, in the clear apprehension of the intrinsic worthlessness of this and most other objects of men's common aims." In this the Socratic self-control becomes contempt for pleasure.

The Megarian movement develops into the systems of Plato and the Neo-Platonists, and into that of Aristotle in a less degree. The Cyrenaic position develops into that of the Epicureans, and the Sceptics of the New Academy. The doctrine of the Cynics develops into that of the Stoics, in which pleasure appears either as an evil, or as a morally indifferent object of will. Each of these tendencies must be briefly sketched.

2. THE PLATONIC DEVELOPMENT.—Plato derived from Socrates both his intellectual and his moral stimulus. But he did not stop with his master's contempt for metaphysical knowledge. On the contrary, he made his ethical doctrine very largely consist in its dependence on such knowledge. When Socrates was called on

to give a reason for certain courses of conduct, in spite of his predetermination to wholly discard Metaphysics, his naive religious belief in a providence induced him to point to the goodness of nature's order, and its providential arrangement. In this, or in his teleological view of the world, he virtually recognized the need of adjustment to its conditions and ends, and prepared the way for the departure of the Megarians and the more developed system of Plato. But he did not even see this promised land which his unconscious instincts pointed out. His disciple, however, saw it and entered into its possession.

There were three main influences which converged in producing Plato's conception of morality or virtue. The first was his antagonism to the doctrine of Heraclitus; the second was his opposition to the sophistic doctrine of the conventional origin of moral law; and the third was the notion that man's chief end was the good which was fixed in the eternal nature of things, and not in the pursuit of transient pleasures. Much the same interest lay at the basis of the first two of these influences, but they represent slightly different motives when taken in different connections.

In opposition to Heraclitus, who saw nothing but flux or change in the universe, Plato sought something real, permanent, eternal. He was not satisfied with a universe of mere phenomena which represented nothing but birth and decay, perpetual creation and destruction. On the metaphysical side, such a doctrine conflicted with the unity of consciousness and the demand for the correlate of all phenomena; namely, that of which events were modes. On the ethical side it made a principle of human conduct, a law of uniform action, impossible. Hence to satisfy both the metaphysical and the ethical demand, Plato set up his "ideas" or *forms*, types of permanent reality, which represented the eternal nature of things. In Ethics this position was an *a priori* assault on the conventional theory of the Sophists, which made morality the sport of legislation and the pursuit of personal interests in a world without fixed or rational order. It will be seen, then, why Plato did not defend

the theological theory. The Sophists, had they admitted the existence of the gods, would not have objected to making moral law a product of their decrees. Hence Plato, believing in their existence, might have referred morality to their authority, but he sought its ground elsewhere, in the eternal nature of things, to which even the divine was subject. He would not recognize that moral law could be the creation of any will or authority. He could conceive it only as an order of things which must or ought to be the object of all wills whatsoever. Hence, without defending or attacking the theological view, he opposed the theory of convention because it implied either that moral law could be created by an exercise of power, or that no law whatever could be imposed upon the individual. He was as much afraid of anarchy, on this account, as we are to-day, and so he sought a fixed law in the constitution of nature according to which man must order his conduct, if he would realize the good. Hence, following the tendencies of the Megarians, springing from the tacit assumptions of Socrates' teleological doctrine of providence, he sought in something external to man the good at which it was his duty to aim, or to which his conduct should conform. He looked at the world and saw that everything was called good or bad, according as it did or did not realize the "idea" or perfect form which it represented. From this he sought to determine the highest good which subordinated all particular things to it, and finding it, he made morality to consist in realizing it as the chief end of man.\* In this he found an end

\*Professor Sidgwick (*History of Ethics*, p. 37) explains this tendency in Plato in the following interesting manner: "Since all rational activity is for some end, the different arts or functions into which human industry is divided are naturally defined by a statement of their ends or uses, and similarly, in giving an account of the different artists and functionaries, we necessarily state their end, 'what they are good for.' It is only so far as they realize this end that they are what we call them. A painter who cannot paint is, as we say, 'no painter,' or, to take a favorite Socratic illustration, a ruler is essentially one who realizes the well-being of the ruled; if he fails to do this, he is not, properly speaking, a ruler at all. And in a society well ordered on Socratic principles, every human being



which could not be confused with pleasure, because this last was a transient phenomenon in human experience, a passing state of feeling. Thus, the ultimate good was something different from pleasure, and independent of any individual will. Plato went so far as to identify it with God, and thus founded his Ethics upon an eternal principle. But in so doing he neither abandoned the psychological standpoint of his school nor exhausted his doctrine by this conception alone. He went on to show that virtue consisted in the rational pursuit of this end, and the emphasis which he placed upon wisdom or knowledge secures his allegiance to the Socratic movement, in spite of his excursion into Metaphysics. In other words, man must consciously and ration-

would be put to some use; the essence of his life would consist in doing what he was good for. But again, it is easy to extend this view throughout the whole region of organized life; an eye that does not attain its end by seeing is without the essence of an eye. In short, we say of all organs and instruments, that they are what we think them in proportion as they fulfill this function and attain their end: if, then, we conceive the whole universe organically, as a complex arrangement of means to ends, we shall understand how Plato might hold that all things really *were*, or 'realized their idea,' in proportion as they accomplished the special end or good for which they were adapted. But this special end, again, can only be really good so far as it is related to the ultimate end or good of the whole, as one of the means or particulars by or in which this is partially realized. If, then, the essence or reality of each part of the organized world is to be found in its particular end or good, the ultimate ground of all reality must be found in the ultimate end or good of the universe. And if this is the ground of all reality it must equally be the source of all guidance for human life; for man, as part and miniature of the Cosmos, can have no good, as he can have no being, which is not derived from the good and being of the universe. Thus Plato, without definitely abandoning the Socratic limitation of philosophy to the study of human good, has deepened the conception of human good until the quest of it takes in the earlier inquiry into the essential nature of the external world from which Socrates turned away. Even Socrates, in spite of his aversion to physics, was led by pious reflection to expound a teleological view of the physical universe, as ordered in all its parts by Divine Wisdom for the realization of some divine end; what Plato did was to identify this Divine End—conceived as the very Divine Being itself—with the good that Socrates sought, of which the knowledge would solve all the problems of human life."

ally pursue the end which nature has fixed for him as his highest good, in order to be moral.

For the realization of this good, Plato must assert the existence of a soul and its immortality in opposition to the materialism of Atomic, Heraclitic and Sophistic doctrines. The soul, however, inhabits a body which is the seat of all sorts of conflicting desires and impulses, each seeking its own satisfaction without regard to others or to reason. It is the business of the moral life at least to bring these into harmony, and hence accepting the general judgment of the Greek consciousness that moderation was the typical virtue (*ἁρμονία, συμμετρία, μηδὲν ἄγαν, σωφροσύνη, μεσότης*, etc.) he sought by his psychology to provide the principle by which this should be effected. He assumed a twofold function of mind, the cognitive and the regulative function, though he did not sharply distinguish between the two processes. The former was concerned with knowledge, and the latter with the control of the impulses, but the essential element of this control was that it was rational, the effect of knowledge, and here appears the psychological importance of knowledge in right conduct. The following scheme represents Plato's psychology :

Mental Powers	Intellectual (Cognitive)	{ αἰσθησις = Sensation (Appearance). δόξα = Belief (Opinion). ἐπιστήμη = Knowledge (Intuition).
	Regulative (Active)	{ ἐπιθυμία = Appetite (Desire). θυμὸς = Impulse (Passion). νοῦς = Reason (Conscience).

In this scheme the terms in brackets represent the more liberal translation of Plato's conception, and the others their modern equivalents, as far as that is possible. Appetite refers to the organic cravings which still go by that name: impulse, the higher appetencies more closely related to reason, but not of it. Both represent irrational desires, and must be under the domination of reason, which is simply Plato's term for our idea of conscience. Plato illustrates their relation by the celebrated myth of the chariot, whose steeds were appetite and impulse, and whose driver was reason. He represented the steeds as wild and

unordered beings who were sure to dash the chariot to pieces and to produce general ruin, unless they were directed by a wise and intelligent charioteer. Such a functionary was reason. It was the regulator and director of blind impulses, guiding them to an intelligent end.

Though Plato thus distinguished between rational and irrational conduct, the distinction does not coincide exactly with our own similarly expressed, though we can trace the lineage of present conceptions to a Platonic origin. Rational and irrational at present imply the contrast between the voluntary and the involuntary excellences or virtues, but Plato did not distinguish between the natural and the acquired good qualities. Hence his rational conduct was conscious as opposed to unconscious action, but not necessarily deliberative as opposed to non-deliberative action. It was reserved for Aristotle to analyze the problem at this point more carefully. With Plato reason expressed less of freedom and spontaneity than of merely intelligent activity. But he drew, once for all, the distinction between conscious and instinctive conduct, which was the difference between a knowledge of the end we are seeking and purely blind unintelligent action. He thus developed more clearly than Socrates the notion *that consciousness or intelligence is the first condition of responsible and therefore of moral conduct*. Plato did not say as much as this, but his doctrine ultimately terminated in that conception of the case, when rationality came to imply freedom and deliberation as well as consciousness.

On the basis of this psychology Plato classified and determined the character of the several virtues. He adopted the four cardinal virtues of Greek tradition as the fundamental types of morality, and placed wisdom at the head of the four. They were Wisdom (*φρόνησις* or *σοφία*), Courage (*ἀνδρεία*), Temperance or Moderation (*σωφροσύνη*), and Justice or Uprightness (*δικαιοσύνη*). In this classification a farther peculiar and interesting analysis was attempted which prepared the way for an important distinction by Aristotle, which still holds in the science of Ethics. Plato has but three faculties, and he must find

the unity of these virtues within his scheme. On the one hand Temperance is the virtue of appetite, and Courage the virtue of impulse; that is, they represent the right use and direction of these desires. According to his conception, Wisdom is their conditioning virtue, and must be their essential quality or accompaniment. On the other hand, Justice is not disposed of in the scheme. But it seems that at other times Plato makes Justice or Uprightness the unity and principle of the others, showing that his mind was not wholly clear as to the method of unifying them by a single principle. But he vaguely anticipated the distinction between knowledge as the good or object of the intellect, and righteousness as the good or object of the will, the distinction between knowledge and virtue which Socrates never could admit. This only makes clear that Plato's conception of virtue never went beyond the good, as an object of will or desire, except as he obscurely caught a sight of what was meant by justice or righteousness; namely, a quality of will as opposed to a quality of intellect. Had he distinguished between legality and equity he might have clarified his views very considerably. But he did determine once for all the conditioning effect of knowledge or intelligence upon the direction of human impulses, and thus showed how necessary it was to the attainment of the good, and to the doctrine of responsibility as later developed.

The contributions of Plato to the ethical problem may be summarized in the following manner: *First*, he made morality to consist of conformity to reason, as opposed to impulse, on the one hand, and to authority on the other. This conception remains as a permanent contribution to the science. *Second*, he founds morality upon the relations between action or law and its *end*, and not upon the relation between law and its *cause*, and hence originates that tendency which arises to substitute *respect* for *fear* as the true motive to virtue. Both of these positions show how Plato belongs to the psychological or subjective school, though other characteristics take him out of it. *Third*, he identifies the ultimate Good with God, and thus moves toward

a doctrine of absorption, as found in Neo-Platonism. This is the metaphysical and religious element in Plato's ethical theory. *Fourth*, he reinforces the Pythagorean doctrine of immortality as a moment or characteristic in ethical life and theory. He thus made the present life a probation for another, and extended the area of time and conditions affecting conduct. *Fifth*, he gave a practical embodiment of his conceptions in an ideal of social life, sacrificing the individual to the organism. In this his politics and ethics were united.

3. THE ARISTOTELIAN SYSTEM.—The first fact of special interest in Aristotle is that he wholly separates his Ethics from Metaphysics, and in this way preserves intact the fundamental principle and spirit of Socrates. Both his Ethics and his Politics are distinct from all of his metaphysical conceptions, and hence we find him wholly departing from the religious ideas and associations of the Platonic system. The doctrines of immortality and of the ultimate end or good of the universe are not touched upon as elements in an ethical theory. Hence he stands only upon an anthropological and psychological foundation. His ethical and his political theories represent that both public and private action have the same object—namely, human welfare or happiness; but they employ different methods. His first step in treating the subject is to maintain, at least by implication, that all conduct obtains its merit or demerit from the end sought. But he finds no occasion to assert this as a disproof of theories of authority. He simply treats the fact as a truism. The end, however, which he affirms to be the highest good is well-being (*εὐδαιμονία*). He meant by this all that we mean by happiness, and also the conditions of realizing it, or connected with it. This happiness is not pleasure (*ἡδονή*), as conceived by the Sophists, nor feeling as general pleasure, but a state of being or perfection which would find pleasure or happiness as one of its concomitants or consequences. Aristotle thus becomes the founder of what may be called Perfectionism, or the theory which makes perfection rather than mere feeling the highest good. The chief improvement of ethical theory, how-

ever, which he introduces, comes from his thorough psychological analysis of the problem.

We have seen the paradox of Socrates concerning the identity of virtue and knowledge, the involuntary character of vice, and the teachability of virtue. Though the way to solve them should have been clear to Plato, he seems to have wholly failed in the effort. He still mistook and exaggerated the nature of wisdom as the good, and fluctuated between two opinions on the question whether virtue could be taught or not. On the one hand, was the common consciousness with which he sympathized, and which thought that men could be educated in virtue. With this Plato's acceptance of the Socratic doctrine agreed since he held that men could be influenced by ideas. On the other hand, was his doctrine of reminiscence, that knowledge was not produced, but only called into clear consciousness by education, and also a widespread conviction that a man's excellences were a constitutional part of his possessions; and hence between these two views Plato came to no final decision. It was at this point that Aristotle began his analysis. His first step was to distinguish between two kinds of "virtue." These were *natural* and *moral* virtue. He could do this because in Greek usage virtue (*ἀρετή*) denoted excellence, good quality, or perfection, and this might be something which was a natural endowment of men, or it might be something acquired by their habits. What Aristotle saw was the distinction between things or natural qualities which we admire or dislike, and moral qualities which we praise or condemn. Both of these were confused in the common use of virtue or excellence. With Socrates it meant any good, and knowledge was the highest form of it. But Aristotle, observing that morality is concerned, mainly, if not exclusively, with the distribution of praise and blame, distinguishes between those excellences which are a part of a man's endowment, and those which are a product of his will. The moral virtues are the latter; and from Aristotle onward virtue, except in a few sporadic phrases outside of Ethics, denotes a quality of will or conduct—that is, it denotes moral as opposed to natural excellence. But while making moral excellence or virtue a product

of will, he does not consider it such when the person merely happens to act casually in conformity with the good, but it must be a *habit* of his actions. Thus, to be virtuous, a man's conduct must be a law for him, the regular expression of his will, and in this way Aristotle anticipates, though he does not develop, the view that virtue or moral merit consists in action according to a formal law, rather than the pursuit of momentary goods. The important feature, however, of the doctrine is that he makes it a habit rather than a faculty or endowed excellence, and in this way he limits morality to the will, excluding it from all the operations of the intellect, as such, and from all actions or qualities considered as natural and as opposed to voluntary events. But this step necessitates another. Following the Platonic conception of a number of impulses or desires struggling for the mastery of the soul, all of which Aristotle assumes to be natural instincts requiring the guidance of reason, he indicates, in accordance with the common conception of moderation as the chief virtue, that moral excellence consists in the *mean* between the excessive and the deficient gratification of natural desires. Here again we find morality defined by reference to the will rather than to the intellect, and its whole character made the result of control over irrational inclinations. Thus, his view is summarized by Schwegler. "Virtue," Aristotle maintained, "is the product of repeated moral action; it is a quality won through exercise, an acquired moral ability of the soul. The nature of this ability may be characterized as follows: Every act accomplishes something as its work; but a work is imperfect if either in defect or excess. The act itself, therefore, will be similarly imperfect either by defect or excess; nor will an act be perfect unless it attain to a right proportion to the due mean between too much and too little. Virtue in general, then, may be defined as observation of the due mean in action. But what is enough or the mean for one man may not be so for another. The virtue of a man is one thing, but that of a wife, a child, a slave, is quite another. In like manner there must be consideration of time, circumstances and relations. Hence, only so far as there are certain

constant relations in life will it be possible to assign also certain leading virtues. Our constant human relation, for example, is that of pleasure and pain. The moral mean in this reference, then, will be fortitude or courage, neither to fear pain nor to seek it. The due mean in regard to pleasure, again, as between apathy and greed, will be temperance. In social life the mean between the doing and the suffering of wrong, between selfishness and weakness, is justice." Throughout the whole scale of the virtues, Aristotle endeavors to carry out his doctrine of the mean between excess and deficiency, which is only his phrase for what Plato meant by the regulation of desire and impulse by reason, while at the same time he exalted into a philosophic principle the common adage about moderation (*σωφροσύνη, μεσότης, μηδὲν ἄγαν*).

But having distinguished between natural and acquired or moral virtues, and limited the latter to phenomena of will, he goes on to distinguish between the voluntary and involuntary actions of man. This distinction is very intimately connected with the former. If all excellences were alike, praise and blame would have to be applied to all or excluded from all. But having maintained that praise and blame attached only to moral actions, respectively virtue and vice, he must farther distinguish between voluntary and involuntary actions as a means of refuting the Socratic claim that virtue or goodness was voluntary, and vice or badness was involuntary. Aristotle made both voluntary, and thus attached praise to virtue and blame to vice; while Socrates could only apply praise to virtue, but not blame to vice. Aristotle thus excluded natural excellences and involuntary actions from the proper province of Ethics. But he went on to distinguish two kinds of voluntary actions—namely, the impulsive and the deliberative. Involuntary acts are neither praiseworthy nor blameworthy. Voluntary acts may be so, but contain different degrees of imputability, only those which are deliberative being rational. Deliberative actions, he maintains, represent a certain degree of intellectual maturity, and he rather asserts that they are not found in animal life. In this way



Aristotle endeavors to establish the fact that man is the cause of his own actions, and that when he deliberates, is responsible for them. We have in this position an elaborate analysis and explanation of the freedom of the will—an analysis which remains a permanent acquisition to philosophy, and represents a most important step in advance of Plato. The latter seems never to have carried freedom beyond the conception of mere "power of self-motion," while the freedom that conditions imputability was by Aristotle made deliberative, and the doctrine of moral responsibility placed upon a basis which it has retained ever since with those who are not determinists.

In contrast with the moral virtues, Aristotle takes up the intellectual, which are the natural excellences. These are scientific capacity (Knowledge), artistic ability (Art), practical insight (Prudence), genius (Wisdom), and moral insight (Reason or Judgment). Judgment or reason he defines as the discernment of what is equitable, and in this shows that he still used the term reason to denote the source of ultimate truth and the regulator of irrational impulses after the manner of Plato. These virtues, however, Aristotle regards as conditioning the moral virtues in their developed form, showing that, although he originated the limitation of the moral virtues to the will, and ultimately determined the limitation of the word "virtue" to morality, he did not go so far as to make morality a matter of *mere* will, as the idealists often do. But he departed far enough from his masters to abandon the notion that knowledge was the *essence* of virtue, and affirmed that it was the *condition* of it; while the tendency to confine morality to the phenomena of volition ultimately terminated in a theory that it consisted in "good will" alone.

In the treatment of Justice (*δικαιοσύνη*) Aristotle also introduces a distinction. Plato makes no important difference between legality and equity. Aristotle draws this line very carefully and clearly. He divides justice into civil justice, or legality, and moral justice or equity. The object of both is the same, but the means of attaining it are different. The agency

for securing civil justice is government or law; for securing moral justice, it is good will or fairness. This distinction develops into the separation of Ethics and Politics, which was tolerably well effected by Aristotle. It represents the distinction between subjective and objective goodness. But as this contrast was not more than hinted at by the Greeks in general, or by Aristotle in particular, we can only allude to it as in the germ in the thought of this master. Besides, it fixes for all time the distinction between law and equity, and so determines the fact that politics must ultimately obtain its authority from ethics, which, in the last resort, appeals to reason and not to convention. Here we find the principle of both Socrates and Plato, and a refutation of the Sophistic doctrine, in that the real question does not concern the *origin* of positive law, but the *ground* of its validity, its equity.

When Aristotle comes to assign the life that represents the ideal good to be striven for, he makes it the contemplative life, and in this he remains true to the Socratic conception of the place occupied by wisdom in the scale of virtue or good. Plato had distinguished between the pure and the mixed pleasures, placing the latter much lower in the scale of ends, and connected the pure and unmixed pleasures with the activities of the intellect. The fact also that he made the philosopher the ruler of his Republic, and exalted the speculative life above all others, explains how Aristotle merely follows in his master's footsteps in making the contemplative life the true one for realizing the highest good. This was idealizing the function of science and philosophy. But after all it only reflects the natural impulse of all the higher intellects of Greece, so one-sided and exaggerated in Neo-Platonism, and was a prominent characteristic in the aristocratic and national tastes of the race. It was the apotheosis of knowledge, and the shadows of that influence still extend over all countries where Greek conceptions have determined their culture.

Aristotle's Ethics may be summarized in the following propositions: *First*, he separates Metaphysics and Ethics. *Second*, he

repudiates pleasure, and accepts well-being or perfection as the *summum bonum*. *Third*, he distinguished between intellectual or natural, and moral excellence, making morality a habit of will instead of a quality of intellect or nature. *Fourth*, he distinguished between voluntary or conscious, and involuntary or unconscious action, and between impulsive and deliberative action, so as to develop a complete theory of freedom and responsibility. *Fifth*, he resolved all virtue into a mean between excess and deficiency, showing how reason (conscience) regulates the impulses toward either of these extremes. *Sixth*, he distinguished between justice and equity, separating Ethics and Politics, though conditioning the rights of the latter upon the former, and thus displaced the doctrine of convention. *Seventh*, his practical application of the ideal was placed in the contemplative life, reflecting the spirit of his race, and probably the consciousness of the political decline of his age, when democracy made it impossible for the noblest men to engage in politics. This is the continuance of that retirement from the world which was taught by Plato, encouraged by the Stoics, and made a religion by Neo-Platonism. It was the asceticism of Plato, without the metaphysics, that conditioned it.

**3d. Post-Aristotelian Ethics.**—There are three schools representing this period: the Stoic, the Epicurean and the Neo-Platonic, but all characterized by a reversion to the method of looking to an external order for determining the maxims of morality, though not wholly abandoning psychological analysis of the problem. The Epicureans, however, in the choice of the *end* of conduct remained faithful to the psychological standpoint in as much as they made it pleasure. But they had a distinct regard to the external order in determining the *means* to this end. The other two schools emphasized, one of them conformity to the ideal order of nature, and the other, ecstasy or absorption in the absolute. The whole period was characterized by the decline of political and social life. Athens had been conquered first by Sparta and then by Macedonia, both of which represented an inferior civilization. The old religious system and beliefs had

crumbled into ashes at the touch of scepticism, and thus, the passing of that brilliant period of culture with the commercial, literary and political system which it had built, was followed by general anarchy, the want of all moral restraint, which made it impossible for the sage or the wise man to live contentedly in the midst of it. The nobler intellectual spirits, therefore, sought their highest good in withdrawal from all participation in political life—the Stoics because of their contempt for its baseness, the Epicureans because, on the one hand, the intellectual life was incompatible with it, and on the other, their individualistic and egotistic Ethics required every man to secure pleasure or happiness for himself; and the Neo-Platonists, because they thought the world unworthy of them, and must seek their good in religious ecstasy. Two schools were thus decidedly ascetic in their ethical ideals, and the other more free, terminating in libertinism, though its first representatives taught and practiced self-control as the condition of the greatest possible amount of happiness.

1. THE STOICS.—The starting point of stoic Ethics was in their system of physics or metaphysics, which was a kind of materialistic pantheism, owing to the fact that they could not comprehend an idealistic view of the world. Following Aristotle, they had imposed so much confidence in the deliverances of sense that the antithesis between the subjective and objective, hinted at in Democritus and the sceptics could not be appreciated, and hence the unity which they found in the world was materialistically conceived. This did not prevent them from conceiving it as the embodiment of reason. Reason was itself a fine fiery ether, and differed from other elements only in the supremacy of its nature and of its power in regulating the order of the world. All nature was its expression, as a universal rational order. Hence reason and nature were practically one in their value and significance for man. In their Ethics, therefore, following the formula of Plato, the highest duty of man was conformity to nature or reason, whether this nature or reason be viewed in the world or in man. Looking upon the universe as a divine order, they could assert that man's supreme

good lay in adjustment to that order, imitation of its harmony, submission to its law, and looking upon man as a group of conflicting forces, of which reason was the higher and better, they could admonish him to follow reason and to free himself from the slavery of passion. Both of these features are decidedly Platonic, one being metaphysical and the other psychological in conception, and as man was only a part of nature the same formula applied to both of them. The life according to reason was the life according to nature.

The highest good according to the Stoics was virtue. This seems a strange formula to modern thought, but it has a meaning much different from what might be supposed. The highest good must be an end, while virtue to our minds expresses a quality of will in reference to an end other than itself. It would therefore seem strange to say that virtue is the *summum bonum*, as if a quality of will could exist in reference to itself alone and without reference to any other end. The stoical formula, therefore, seems paradoxical. But the many sided meaning of the Greek idea of virtue (*ἀρετή*) makes possible a conception not suggested by the modern narrower import. In Greek it denoted variously "good," which might denote either an end or a quality of will, "excellence" or perfection, a quality of being, and moral merit or "virtue," which we now limit to the will. The second of these meanings removes the paradoxical nature of the formula, and hence if we regard the Stoics as holding with Aristotle, that the highest good is perfection, we can both understand their maxims and the relation of their doctrine to both the Socratics and the Epicureans. It was moral perfection, but it had reference to a state or quality of being, rather than an abstract quality of action, and virtue is a quality of action in reference to an end, and so cannot be made an absolute; perfection, is an end and may be ultimate. Hence, from this we may see how the Stoics could regard "virtue" as the highest good. This opposition to Epicureanism is perfectly intelligible in this conception: otherwise it is not. But in saying that virtue is the highest good they did not mean to say that pleasure

should be eschewed. They admitted that this might be the wise and good man's reward, the consequence of pursuing virtue or perfection, but it was not to be the object of moral volition. Indeed, the good man showed his superiority by his indifference to it, by his ability to do without it. So careful was the Stoic to exclude pleasure from all consideration, even as an accident of virtue, that he maintained the ideal life to be one of tranquility (*ἀταραξία*), freedom from excitement either of pleasure or pain, a life of calm and repose, but always of composure and endurance, if pain was unavoidable, because it was not in its nature an evil. Pain was neither to be feared nor despised, any more than pleasure was to be desired. Both were to be treated as matters of indifference.

In regard to wisdom or knowledge the Stoic does not remain on the Socratic platform. He does not regard knowledge as a good in itself: he considers it merely as a means to an end and so subordinates it entirely to practical and ethical purposes. This position is quite in the direction of the view that morality is a product of the will and not of the intellect. That is to say, the Stoics follow out the impulse given by Aristotle's distinction between intellectual and moral excellence, and make morality to consist in strength and activity of will. That mental characteristic of Socrates, of which he never seemed conscious, namely, strength of will, and which the Cynics exalted into a principle of Ethics, the Stoics came to regard as the fundamental characteristic of virtue as moral excellence, and as the only condition, on the one hand, of adjustment to the world and its divine order, and on the other, of control over the influence of passion. In this view they practically emphasized the part played by the will and what we should call moral courage in the conception of the function of conscience. They admitted the strength of the emotions, instincts or passions, but urged the necessity of overcoming them by reason, if the law of nature was to be obeyed or respected. Though they thus laid the foundation, they did not develop a doctrine of conscience.

Other aspects of the Stoic Ethics were natural consequences of

the main theory. For instance, the emphasis laid upon virtue as the good and its alliance with the will, led to the doctrine that the motive or intention was sufficient to sanctify conduct. This notion grew out of the distinction between perfect and imperfect duties, the former being absolute and the latter conditional. The only perfect duty, however, was the will or wish to do the good. This was an anticipation of the modern doctrine that virtue consists in "good-will."

From this view, and the relation of the wise man to the course of nature, came the Stoic theory of determinism. They required of man absolute resignation to nature or God: he must think God's will better than his own will, "that there is only one way to happiness and independence, that of willing nothing except what is in the nature of things, and what will realize itself independently of our will." This determinism, however, only affected the external choice of man, not his internal disposition, which remained free. If the order of the world did not permit perfect freedom in the satisfaction of desire, it also did not prevent the good will from realizing the proper attitude of feeling toward that order, and herein consisted man's freedom. This distinction between man's internal and external freedom was a farther analysis of the ethical problem than Aristotle had attempted, and it especially expresses the conflict felt by a high moral consciousness between itself and the unbending course of natural law and the hard social conditions of the time, though it also probably expresses a conflict between desire and what reason enjoins as a duty. At any rate, in their doctrine of modified determinism, we have the strong consciousness of the limitations upon man's power, and his duty to conform his will to them. The same doctrine appears more fully developed in later Christianity.

One other doctrine has some interest, and this is the universal brotherhood of men, without distinction of nationality, which they founded on his common fatherhood. They did not, however, disapprove of slavery, which would seem the natural consequence of their position. But this was probably due to several circumstances: First, a system of slavery which permitted of an

Epictetus was not likely to be felt as an evil. Second, as internal freedom could not be affected by the servitude of the body, and was all that was in reality desirable, there was nothing to excite the opposition of the Stoic. Third, it was not equality for which the Stoics contended, but brotherly and harmonious relations between fellow-men, and they saw nothing in the nature of slavery, or the subjection of one man to another, inconsistent with this, especially as his own highest duty was to live in subjection to the universal law of nature. Slavery, therefore, could not appear as an evil to the Stoic.

The distinctive characteristics of Stoic morality may be summed up in the following paragraphs: *First*, morality is conformity to nature or reason, whether we regard it in man or in the world. *Second*, virtue is the highest good, and this represents good will as the motive or attitude of reason, and perfection as the end. *Third*, wisdom is not an absolute good or end in itself, but a means to virtue, being thus subordinated wholly to practical purposes. *Fourth*, the intention or motive is the essential element of morality. *Fifth*, man's freedom is limited to internal choice, his dependence upon the course of nature restricting the satisfaction of desire to the government of reason. *Sixth*, all men belong to the same brotherhood, and national boundaries should give way to a federal life more after the type of the family.

2. THE EPICUREANS.—The philosophy of Epicurus and his school has three sources. Its physics and metaphysics originate in the atomism of Democritus, its negation of religion and theology in the scepticism of the Sophists, and its Ethics in the doctrine of the Cyrenaics. The three influences were welded together to form a compact and consistent whole. The one primary motive which seems to have dominated the school was the desire to overcome the sense of supernaturalism and religious fear, and thus to establish that mental calm and poise which were essential alike to the perception of truth, the performance of virtue and the attainment of happiness. Hence they resorted to purely physical explanations of things. Their materialism, this being embodied in the atomic theory, was designed to remove



all belief in the causal interference of the divine in things, and with it the fear that kept men in subjection to arbitrary laws and prevented their free pursuit of pleasure. They rather inconsistently admitted the existence of the gods, but placed them in the intermundia, or interspaces of the world, where they could exercise no influence upon the course of it. For this reason there was no ground to fear their power to harm man or to interfere with the freedom of his life.

Having emancipated the human will presumably from superstition and fear of the gods, the next step was to determine the principles of morality, which were, of course, placed in the enjoyment of this liberty. As with the Socratic and Stoic schools the first thing to settle was the highest good, and this they boldly made to be pleasure, thus adopting the ethic of ends as opposed to authority. But they did not accept sensual pleasure as fulfilling the terms of the problem though they conceived pleasure only in reference to sense. The distinction drawn by Plato and Aristotle, on the one hand between intellectual and sensuous pleasures, and on the other between pure and mixed pleasures, with the implied substitution of remote for momentary satisfaction, was not without its influence upon this school. For it made intellectual pleasure the type of good to be sought by the wise man, and made knowledge and self-control essential means to this end. Like the Stoics, therefore, they subordinated knowledge to practical objects. This inclination went so far that they valued the study of physical phenomena only for their tendency to banish religion and superstition. No such interest as the Stoics displayed in science on its own account was maintained by the Epicureans. Scientific knowledge was estimated solely according to its utility, or power to contribute to a happy life. In this way the whole philosophy of the Epicureans was concentrated in their morality.

The first object, therefore, which the school had to determine was the highest good, the ultimate end of desire, to which everything else was subordinate as a means. This they uniformly made pleasure, though they were not always consistent in their

assertions of what was to be regarded as pleasure. In one thing, however, they were unflinching and consistent, and this was their invariable denial of the Stoic formula which made virtue or excellence the ultimate end. Hence they did not look upon virtue as something to be sought on its own account, but only on account of pleasure or happiness. They never conceived the two as separable. They agreed that virtue and happiness were invariably connected, but asserted that virtue was only a means to happiness, and not an end in itself. The Stoic had said that virtue or excellence was the *end* and happiness its consequence or concomitant, though not a means to it. On the other hand, the Epicurean asserted that virtue was only the *means* and happiness the *end* of conduct, and thus marked an irreconcilable opposition between the two points of view. The effect of this was to subordinate everything else in life to the pursuit of pleasure. We have, then, in the school, the predecessors of modern Utilitarianism, at least in so far as happiness is taken as the criterion of what is right. The important difference between the ancient and modern form of the theory, however, is that the Epicureans were wholly *egoistic*, and modern Utilitarians are mainly *altruistic* in their conception of the matter. The difference is also embodied in the opposition between Individualism and Socialism, the later being taken in the sense of voluntary co-operation to attain a common end.

The main features of the Epicurean ethics are occupied like that of the Stoics, with a description of the wise man, a method that was unconscious testimony to the imperfectly developed condition of the general moral consciousness. This aside, however, their conception of the wise man, drawn from the dominant spirit of the Socratic movement, was that of a person who successfully and prudently steered a middle course between passion and asceticism. His object was his own pleasure or happiness, and every arrangement of life, marriage, friends, political duties, personal habits, occupation, etc., were sacrificed, or at least made to bend, to this one aim. Though various members of the school did not always agree as to the form which

this pleasure should take, some holding that it was sensuous and some intellectual, they were agreed that the end was pleasure rather than perfection, excellence or virtue. The agreement was still further made clear in the fact that the devotees of intellectual pleasure gave this an ultimate reference to the sensuous. Their ideal of happiness comprehended the past and the future. Their intellectual pleasures, so far from being opposed to the sensuous, were merely the contemplation of past sensuous pleasures, the anticipation of future, and the regulation of life so as to sacrifice merely momentary to more remote and permanent pleasures. It was this that marked the advance of the school upon the Cyrenaics, and more especially determines the rational and reflective character of its system. "The Cyrenaic was a buoyant and self-reliant nature, who lived in the light of a grander day in Greece, and he plucked pleasures carelessly and lightly from the trees in the garden of life as he passed through on his journey, without anxiety for the future or regret for the past. The sage of Epicureanism is a rational and reflective seeker for happiness, who balances the claims of each pleasure against the evils that may possibly ensue, and treads the path of enjoyment cautiously, as befits 'a sober reason which inquires diligently into the grounds of acting or refraining from action, and which banishes those prejudices from which spring the chief perturbation of the soul.'" This peculiarity shows that the school had advanced beyond the most simple form of Hedonism and had discovered the necessity of some sacrifice, if only of the pleasures of the moment, in order to attain the ideal or greatest amount of happiness, though it required the development of later ages to extend the idea of sacrifice from that of the present for the future to that of personal for social good. The Epicureans, therefore, stand between pure and unreflective Egoism, and universalistic, or altruistic Hedonism. The concession made to self-sacrifice, however, was an unconscious one, and purely selfish in its nature, though it involved a training of consciousness in habits of self-control which would be felt on life in a way probably not intended.

When the school came to define what it meant by happiness, it seems less removed from the views of preceding schools than is at first apparent. Pleasure was usually conceived as a positive and agreeable sensation or excitement of mind, "a motion" of the soul. But the Epicureans along with the Stoics deprecated the violence of those states which were so denominated, and regarded them rather as accompaniments of intemperate gratifications, and hence defined the happiness of the wise man as tranquillity or repose (*ἀταραξία*), indifference to passionate enjoyment, on the one hand, and to his destiny in the universe on the other. There is a touch of Stoicism in this attitude. But its ascetic character is eliminated by the fact the Epicurean thought the highest pleasures were obtained by securing the absence of pain, and thus he could still emphasize happiness as the most desirable condition for the pursuit of life. But even this repose did not suppress the interest in positive pleasures which were so much the object of praise and expectation that the development of the school lost sight of the limitations prescribed by the founder to legitimate excitement and became a by-word for voluptuousness. Its definition of happiness as repose did protect its tendencies against the reputation which history and tradition have ascribed to it; while the motives to which it appealed, the particular ideals which it exalted, and the pleasures which it pursued, gave a coloring to the system which no paradoxes of definition could remove. Hence the school will always be known as the antithesis of Stoicism and the advocate of hedonistic Ethics.

The summarized doctrine of the school is as follows: *First*, its interest in physical science and philosophic knowledge only as a means of eliminating superstition and of increasing the amount of happiness attainable in life. *Second*, its uncompromising antagonism to religious beliefs. *Third*, the doctrine that the highest good is pleasure to which virtue and all else are subordinated as means. *Fourth*, the distinction between intellectual and sensuous pleasures, not as different in kind, for ultimately all pleasures were the same, but as different in the mode and time of

their realization, the former having for their object the higher æsthetic enjoyments of life.

The general development of the school was in the direction of scepticism and passed out with that intellectual movement. The decline of Greek civilization involved Epicureanism as one of its first victims, and there remained to continue the struggle for moral consciousness, only the Neo-Platonists whose thought and influence extended into the Christian period until Justinian closed the school of Athens in 529 A. D. From that time they were superseded by Christianity.

3. THE NEO-PLATONISTS.—Neo-Platonism was a mixture of philosophy and religion; the former being defective in scientific spirit and method and the latter in any definite notions of personality. Its peculiar character is best described by calling it a system of theosophy, combining oriental theurgy and Hellenic naturalism; that is to say, oriental mysticism, magic and myths were mingled, sometimes in a literal way, and sometimes allegorically, with the philosophic spirit of Greek thought, and a kind of spiritualistic pantheism was the outcome. We find this in Ammonius Saccas, Proclus, Plotinus, Jamblichus, Porphyry, Philo Judæus and others. The whole movement represented a completely ascetic retirement from the general spirit of Greek social and political activity though clinging to the intellectual ideals of its best days. The speculative or contemplative life, so much exalted by Plato and Aristotle, was developed out of all proportion to its proper place until it passed into the monks' idolatry of seclusion from the world. In its first and metaphysical impulse it was a search for the Absolute, and absolute knowledge. In this it was the foil of the scepticism which rivalled it for the conquest of the age, and represented the last, and perhaps despairing, effort to secure a foot-hold for truth. This Absolute was *thought*, the pure intuition of reason, which was the ultimate and common essence of all intelligence, no individual being more than an emanation from it—"a light sparkle floating in the ether of Deity"—and thus represented the unity of all things. It was, of course, above matter and endowed with divine attri-

butes, though no conceptions of man could adequately define it. They could only figuratively describe it, so that it remained perfect and divine, but incomprehensible, unspeakable and transcendent.

It was this ineffable distance of the divine essence from man and the hopeless decay of Greek civilization that gave one of them the religious, and the other the ascetic tone to Neo-Platonic Ethics. Disappointment with the world made the Neo-Platonist a recluse, and the consciousness of the immeasurable distance of the divine, or the ideal vastly beyond the reach of sense and the imagination, made him a devotee. His philosophy was a bold idealism, the last refuge of the revolt against skepticism, and thus cutting himself off from the world, and aspiring to become what his reason told him was the highest object of hope and contemplation, his life became one of ecstasy, a ceaseless contemplation of the absolute. Thus his Philosophy and Ethics were one, a belief and a religious absorption in the absolute. Its whole mood was, therefore, a religion, with the ineffable purity of God in front and man's imperfection in the background. There was no theory of morality as we find it in the saner traditions of Greek life, but only moral and religious ecstasy, which we find reproduced or represented in the monasticism of later times and in the oriental devotees of that and earlier periods. It was a mood that aimed at the purification of life from the carnality of the flesh. The material world and embodiment of the soul were despised and all the aspirations were directed to purifying the soul from its contact with the world. The system thus lent itself very readily to the presuppositions of Judaistic thought, connected with its sacrificial and ceremonial worship, and in this way influenced and was influenced by the movement embodied in Christianity. The ethical consciousness turned away from the world to seek its object in the supersensual, contrary to the main trend of Greek life, and once more substituted the religious for the scientific mode of thought. This explains its ascetic character and shows why its ethical tendencies were not only subjective, but also of the *contemplative* rather than the *active* sort. It was emo-

tional rather than volitional, and took its coloring from metaphysical interests rather than from social conditions and aims.

The main points which summarize Neo-Platonic teaching are as follows: *First*, a system of metaphysical absolutism arising as a revolt against scepticism. *Second*, a spirit of religious ecstasy which aimed at emancipation from the bonds of the flesh, or material existence. *Third*, an ascetic withdrawal from all social and political life as it then existed. *Fourth*, a conception of the complete contrast between the imperfections of man on the material side and the perfection of the divine, which could be overcome only by a ceaseless occupation with the divine. Thus the highest *ethical* aim becomes the apprehension of the divine. Reflection instead of action is consequently the form which its morality takes.

*II. MEDIEVAL ETHICS.*—This movement of ethical reflection may be said to begin with Christianity, though it more accurately describes the thought of the 9th and 15th centuries inclusively. But as the main impulse comes from Christianity, the movement must be traced to that origin, with such elements as were imported into it from contact with Greek philosophy. The main characteristics of the whole period are the religious source and coloring of the moral consciousness, with the authority for its mandates in the divine will and revelation. Its object was man's redemption and the glory of God. The whole movement was conceived from the standpoint of man's relation to God and the hereafter, all immediately human affairs being subordinated to this. It rapidly developed a philosophy or theology and modified the purely religious features by speculative considerations, which also became complicated with the political and ecclesiastical interests of the age. Hence, we shall have to recognize three different periods of its development, characterizing the predominance of distinct elements in the system. These we shall call *Primitive Christianity*, *Philosophic Christianity*, and *Ecclesiastical Christianity*. Each one of these forms must be considered separately.

**1st. Primitive Christianity.**—This took its rise in the general social, moral and religious chaos reigning throughout Rome, Greece and Palestine. But, unlike Neo-Platonism, it did not counsel monastic withdrawal from the world; nor did it return to the Platonic and Aristotelian system of direct participation in political life. It was at the outset neither a system of metaphysics about man's hopeless entanglement in the bonds of sense, nor a theory for the political regeneration of the age. It was rather a return to the better elements of Judaism and changed the method of regeneration from the *reflective* to the *practical*, on the one hand, and from the *social* to the *individual*, on the other. Greek thought expected moral and political redemption, the one from philosophy and the other from government. Christianity expected to realize both from the individual practice of religion and humanity, religion consisting in reverence for God's law and humanity in the treatment of fellow-men as brothers.

The Founder of Christianity did not teach either a philosophy or a theology. Some assumptions, wholly Judaistic, were made about the existence and fatherhood of God, but no dogmas were propounded, and nothing like proof of either of them. He did not seem to have ever been aware that scepticism regarding them was possible. Hence he did not premise them as philosophic conditions of his doctrine, but proceeded to offer the world regeneration by changing the heart and will of the individual. He simply ignored every form of philosophy, whether Judaistic or Hellenic, and more particularly the political hopes and ideals of his own race. He taught that each man was to be just to every other man, that all had a common father, and that they should live in peace with each other. The kingdom of God, which had been conceived as a political and ecclesiastical hierarchy, he taught was a condition of the individual heart and will, a feeling of human brotherhood, and so implied that whatever social advancement was attainable must be established by the moralization of the individual. The individual he sought to regenerate by awakening in him the springs of love to God and love to man, and this was to be effected by giving his own life



and service to man and his welfare. Greek morality in both the theological and political stages appealed to *fear* as the means of affecting conduct, the founder of Christianity appealed to *love*, and expected thereby to moralize the will as well as conduct. It is this, the correlate of the idea of human brotherhood, that marks the contrast between Christian and Hellenic morality and so indicates the new principle which was to characterize the later moral consciousness. It was the first emphatic recognition, though not theoretically asserted, that morality is internal as well as external, that the good will is the only permanent guarantee of right moral relations in the world. This teaching was especially embodied in the "Sermon on the Mount," and abounds in numerous maxims throughout the Gospels. It is summarized in a statement which rivals Kant's celebrated formula and contains essentially the same meaning: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them." The example, purity, and enthusiasm of the master soon attracted disciples, and the doctrine took an organized form. The master was looked upon as the Messiah who was to deliver his people from bondage and restore the kingdom of Israel. The novelty of his doctrine consisted in the clearness with which he developed the teaching of the prophets while utilizing the national aspirations to give it force and power. His followers thus became imbued with his mission, and between moral insight into his doctrine and faith in his personality, they saw in him the long looked for Messiah. During his life, however, his disciples gave his person and teaching mainly a moral and a political meaning with a religious background. But the crisis of his crucifixion and death, with the disappointments which it brought, transformed the whole system into a religion pure and simple, with its morality subordinated to the end of spiritual rather than social regeneration. The burden of his original teaching rested upon two conceptions, the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and represented the "kingdom of heaven" after the type of the family. But his death, without wholly changing the formula of his teaching, very greatly modified its meaning. First, Judaistic and then Hellenic con-

ceptions, floating in the common consciousness of the age, attached themselves to the fundamental propositions of the Christian church and gave its doctrine a new and deeper religious import. The Judaistic conception of the Messiah, as a savior of the nation, its doctrine of sacrifices, and of sin with its alienation from God combined to change the conception of man's relation to his creator. They added the idea of sovereignty to that of the fatherhood of God, and produced the doctrine of vicarious atonement for sin. These are especially prominent in the Gospel of St. John and the Epistles of St. Paul. The conception of the brotherhood of man remained unchanged. The disappointment at the failure to immediately realize the "kingdom of heaven" transformed that conception into an ideal paradisaic existence after death, and modified the motive of righteousness by uniting individual interest with the injunctions of religion. Summarized, therefore, Christianity was from the outset a doctrine of salvation. Like Neo-Platonism it was for the salvation of the individual, but unlike the same system it involved distinctly Judaistic elements and expected to regenerate social life through this agency, reversing the traditions of Greek thought. This salvation took on an extended meaning when it was made to comprehend reconciliation with God as well as man, and spiritual perfection in an existence beyond the grave. Man's moral consciousness was thus directed to the propitiation of his Maker, on the one hand, and to the duties which would secure him a blissful immortality on the other; both of these conditions comprehended right relations with his fellows. In this way Christianity retained the strength of its original impulse.

This primitive movement may be summarized in the following conceptions. It is divided into two stages. *First*, a spiritual as opposed to the political conception of the Messiah. *Second*, the moral regeneration of the individual as the first step in social salvation, or the realization of "the kingdom of heaven." *Third*, the Judaistic doctrine of the fatherhood of God. *Fourth*, the extension of the brotherhood of man first beyond the limits of sects and classes, and then to comprehend all nations. *Fifth*, the inculcation of love in opposition to fear as the means to right

conduct or the establishment of the right relations between different personalities, whether divine or human. This love took the form of "good will" to man (benevolence), and gratitude and reverence toward God (worship). The second stage involves some modification of the original conception. *First*, the sovereignty as well as the fatherhood of God. *Second*, a sense of sin or alienation from God. *Third*, salvation or reconciliation with God by means of vicarious atonement. *Fourth*, the immortality of the soul and the realization of "the kingdom of heaven" after death.

The moral consciousness was profoundly transfigured by all of these ideas. Religious sentiment and philanthropic impulse combined to give a new motive to conduct and morality became an expression of personal character as well as conformity to law. It was intensely practical and in this respect was opposed to the speculative life of Hellenic thought. The second general period however modified this tendency.

**2d. Philosophic Christianity.**—Traces of this development are very distinct in the tendency to import philosophic Judaism into Christian doctrine. This is especially true of St. Paul's teaching, while both Hellenic and Judaistic elements are noticeable in the doctrines of St. John. The Pauline doctrine consisted of man's natural depravity, his alienation from God, sacrificial atonement, and justification by faith: the Johannine contribution was mainly the doctrine of the Logos, sacrificial atonement and brotherly love. The first two were the philosophical and the last the ethical element. The doctrine of the Logos was the Hellenic element introduced to rationalize Christianity, while the doctrine of atonement, both in Paul and John, was the Judaistic element introduced to maintain the continuity of revelation and providence. The sense of sin and alienation was common to Judaism and Neo-Platonism, though conceived in the former as a moral defect of man's will and in the latter as a natural consequence or imperfection of man's corporeal existence. Justification by faith was wholly a new doctrine and grew out of the personal relation between master and disciple. Faith at first

was only a quality of will toward a person, or fidelity to person and principle. With St. Paul it began gradually to represent intellectual assent to doctrine. From this point it became the chief organ of Christian belief and life, as reason had been the organ of Greek thought. Christianity was called upon to justify its distinctive doctrines. The systems of St. John and St. Paul were attempts at this result. As Judaism declined and Græco-Roman thought prevailed, philosophic tendencies increased their demands and influence, and the great conflict between religion and science began. On the one hand, Christianity insisted upon the truth of its distinctive religious beliefs, and in lieu of reason as a court of judgment was content with faith, while philosophy repudiated all that could not verify its credentials before the court of reason. This intellectual contest concerned the essential doctrines of Christianity as then understood, the Trinity, the atonement, the nature of God, the soul and its immortality, and the principles of salvation. Morality took the channel of charity and such Christian graces and virtues as represented the new order. But there was no special philosophy of Ethics. The moral consciousness was absorbed in reconciling itself with God and insuring its eternal welfare. A theory of social conduct and duties apart from salvation hereafter did not occupy its attention. The whole moral movement of Christianity had become absorbed in religious rites and philosophic reflection on its doctrines. But the conflict between reason and faith continued to agitate the church until her political triumph over the Roman Empire. Even then it did not subside, but the method of dealing with the problem changed into a practical one.

The summary of the main features of this second period, extending down to about the ninth century, when a sort of truce between the two contending parties was concluded, is as follows: *First*, an attempt at the philosophic justification of Christianity and its essential doctrines. *Second*, the practice of morality with a direct reference to immortality. *Third*, the adoption of ascetic and monastic conceptions of life, in virtue of the need of redemption.

**3d. Ecclesiastical Christianity.**—The triumph of the church and the downfall of Rome gave Christianity a new method. In fact, the reorganization of the state was made under the influence and domination of the church and is well called the Holy Roman Empire. Called to reconstruct social order out of chaos, the church lost no time in patching up a peace with the philosophic spirit, though it was accomplished partly by the fusion of reason and faith, and partly by the exercise of her imperial authority. Previous to her triumph the only influence to be relied upon for retaining the allegiance of her votaries was a moral and religious attachment to her doctrines. But when she began to wield ecclesiastical power and to control the civil authority, her influence was both changed and increased. When the contest between reason and faith again broke out, and reason threatened to dissolve the speculative doctrines of the church, her ecclesiastical power was strong enough to decide the balance in favor of the authority of faith. Arrogating to herself the claim of being the sole repository of Christian tradition and truth, she was able to place the stamp of authority on her doctrines as well as her civil laws, and in lieu of the ultimate authority of reason, claimed by philosophy, substituted the infallibility and authority of her decrees. The supreme guide of the individual, both in matters of truth and duty, of reason and conscience, was the councils of the church and her delegated agents. Under cover of this power her priests and councils regulated the beliefs and practices of her members down to the minutest details. Not only the rites and ceremonies of religious worship came under their jurisdiction, but also the rights and manner of secular employments. The confessional was the means of carrying out this policy and extended its authority into all the privacy and secrets of the family and of the individual heart. The confessional was a substitute for individual conscience, and served as an ecclesiastical restraint upon personal liberty precisely such as the political system of Plato was calculated to produce. No man needed to be the judge of his conduct. His life was surrendered to the control of the church. His salvation, moral and religious, was in her hands. His duty was

obedience to the appointed agents of the church. This insured his redemption. He had only to conform to the laws of the church, if he wished to be saved. In this way justification by works was substituted for justification by faith, and a vast system of purely external morality established in place of the love and good will which characterized the first impulse of Christianity. There was no theoretical system of Ethics apart from the scheme of salvation. Civil as well as religious duties were directed by the same end, and sanctioned by the same authority. The state was a part of the system of divine government looking to man's spiritual welfare and salvation, and all conduct was regulated with more or less reference to this end, and regulated by a hierarchical power that left nothing to individual initiation and freedom, except such as it was imprudent or dangerous to interfere with or disturb. The chief influence of this social, political and religious condition of things, subject as it was to prelatical dictation and control was *to imbue the moral consciousness of the age with the sense and reverence for authority*. This was a decidedly better moral condition than the *fear* of arbitrary power which dominated Greek civilization, because it insured greater stability for the social system and voluntary obedience to its laws. But it was, nevertheless, an attempt to determine morality from without instead of from within. It made virtue to consist wholly in external conformity to law while using the motive of religious reverence to enforce it, instead of relying upon the spontaneous choice of the individual will to determine merit. The determination of the course of conduct, the method of salvation, was left to external authority, while the danger of resistance was overcome by inculcating reverence for it. This was the manner in which salvation by works supplanted justification by faith, the inner principle of regeneration which was to Christianity what Kant's "good will" is to idealistic Ethics. Consequently the abandonment of that inner principle resulted in establishing a foreign authority over the will, and both the moral and religious consciousness became a dependency upon hierarchical decrees, though modified by the voluntary submission and respect which it paid

to the assumed legitimacy of that power. Still morality sprang from authority and was independent of the intelligence and good will of the agent, except so far as respectful obedience determined his share in it.

Side by side with this ecclesiastical system there developed occasionally a more correct view of morality, and one that was connected with the cultivation of philosophy. This appears first in Abelard (1079—1142 A. D.), who in many respects was the founder, but in respect to Ethics was the Nemesis, of scholasticism. The discussions about predestination, the sovereignty of God and the freedom of the will attracted much attention as affecting the conception of sin and responsibility. The upholder of the first two doctrines made sin to consist in the violation of the law without regard to the motive. But whatever was to be said of predestination and divine sovereignty, Abelard saw that personal merit and demerit depended upon the character and choice of the will. He therefore taught that virtue consists in the intention and not in the act. The theological point of view, as opposed to the naturalistic, is apparent in his conception of the highest good. The absolutely highest good, he considers, is God: for man, it is the love of God. The way that leads to the attainment of this good is virtue, which is a confirmed habit of will (*bona in habitum solidata voluntas*). But it is in the motive or intention, not in the act *per se*, that merit and demerit reside. This intention depends upon the consciousness of the distinction between right and wrong. Hence Abelard lays some stress upon a doctrine of conscience, as opposed to objective and authoritative morality. Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas followed more or less in the same line and laid down principles which were resumed and developed in the Reformation. They were all based upon the freedom of the individual will and were the germs of the doctrine that finally dissolved scholasticism.

The summary of this whole movement will contain the following elements. *First*, the final triumph of the church in its struggle with the state, and the establishment of an ecclesiastical system controlling the entire life and thought of the individual. *Second*,

the continuance of the struggle between reason and faith after their temporary reconciliation until faith supplanted reason in the determination of dogma. *Third*, the regulation of individual conscience by authority, which was the necessary outcome of the civil power of the church. *Fourth*, the substitution of justification by works for justification by faith. *Fifth*, the sporadic appearance of the more philosophic doctrine that virtue was internal rather than external, or the product of intention rather than purely formal obedience. It was the conflict between the last two ideas, along with the demand for secular and religious liberty as opposed to ecclesiastical authority that brought about the Reformation and the whole modern intellectual movement.

*III. MODERN ETHICS.*—The spirit of modern life represents a reaction against religious and ecclesiastical authority and so is a return to naturalism, as it may be called. This tendency very profoundly affects Ethics, both theoretical and practical. It explains the desire on the part of many writers to emancipate morality from religion, and to emphasize secular as opposed to religious ideas. The movement is particularly a rejuvenation of Greek philosophy, though greatly modified in its spirit and contents by the influence of Christianity. The forces which represent and contributed to it were the revival of literature, Copernican astronomy, the emancipation of Europe from papal dictation, Newtonian gravitation and scientific progress with all the later industrial, scientific and economic developments. Two early movements have not been included in this list, because in reality they represented the main impulses of the reaction. They were the religious and philosophic reformations. The first was headed by Luther and the second by Descartes. Both attacked the authority of the church, the one its authority over conscience and the other its authority over speculative reason. Descartes did not rush into open conflict with the church, but his philosophy was irreconcilable with its dogmatic method. Descartes' system was rationalism in philosophy, and Protestantism was the precursor of rationalism in theology. Both emancipated the human mind from authority, and placed individual reason upon its own respon-



sibilities. Both declared principles that modified the direction and content of ethical reflection, though both retained the religious conception of its object. The philosophic movement divided into two main tendencies, the empirical and psychological of English thought, and the idealistic of continental thought. Each of them will be considered in an independent order. But we shall begin with the nature and influence of the Protestant Reformation.

**1st. The Theological Reformation.**—The Protestant Reformation was the fruit of general intellectual, social and religious unrest, due to the tyranny and corruption of the papal church. It was preceded and accompanied by those discoveries of Columbus, Copernicus, and Galileo, which widened the horizon of human knowledge, and overthrew the traditions of the past which were identified too closely with the interests of the church. These influences were in the direction of greater freedom of thought, but would have accomplished less than they did, had not the revolt of Protestantism secured a religious reformation, as science and philosophy secured the intellectual. But these are not the elements that connect Protestantism with the development of Ethics. These factors are comprehended in what the movement stood for as a revolt against ecclesiastic policy and authority. Protestantism represented two principles connected with the same end, the practical and the doctrinal. The first was the assertion of individual conscience against the moral corruption of the church, the vices of the clergy, the sale of indulgences, monastic disorders, and similar offences. The second and doctrinal reform was the correlate of the first, and was the reassertion of justification by faith. Both of these affected the problems of Ethics. The first substituted conscience for the authority of ecclesiastical power, and the second restored the original Christian position that moral regeneration is internal. This latter doctrine was the central and essential principle of Protestantism. What it meant for Ethics was the entire displacement of ecclesiastical authority, so laboriously established by scholasticism, and the substitution of the individual conscience in its place. In this salvation, temporal and eternal,

was the result, not of works, but of faith. Man was brought by this course into direct communion with God through his own conscience and religious insight. He required no human intermediation, as the priestly practices of the period implied. His justification came by faith, the inner principle of the soul which is the spring of every regenerated will, because it is the surrender of the soul to God, and the perfections which he represents. But Protestantism did not abandon all that was contained in the idea of authority. So abrupt a course is hardly to be expected in any age. It simply transferred the idea from the church to revelation, from human to divine agency. Revolting against the papal system, it could not resort to a similar method for determining the ground of its own doctrines, and must perforce yield to the natural demands of the time for authority in support of its claims. This it sought for religion, in revelation, and for morality, in conscience, enlightened and governed by revelation. Here arose the distinction that has characterized the two separate, or supposably separate, fields of Ethics and religion, and later Rationalism took it up to concentrate its emphasis upon the former. Ethics came to represent duties to man, and religion duties to God. Conscience was the organ of morality, and faith the organ of religion with revelation as its guide. In neither case, however, did the new position succeed in eliminating older assumptions made to guarantee the dogmas of the church. The doctrine of infallibility and of the supreme authority of the church was the natural consequence of its subordination of the civil power, on the one hand, and of its suppression of reason, on the other. In Protestantism it divided its jurisdiction. The infallibility and authority of revelation supplanted that of the church and the pope, and was the warrant for religious truth, while the infallibility and authority of conscience was and is the survival in Ethics of the ecclesiastical doctrine in regard to the basis of both morality and religion. The foundation of morality and of salvation was thus shifted over to the subject of them, and the whole doctrine of religion made compatible with the idea of freedom, whether personal or

political, and subsequent development in the direction of political and religious liberty was made possible. Justification by faith, therefore, was the source of modern individualism, so far as responsibility is concerned, and as opposed to ecclesiastical authority and mediation: discredited ritualism in religion, and determined the modern doctrine of conscience with its conception of personality and character, or good will, as the most essential condition of morality.

A brief summary of the influence of the Reformation will include the following points. *First*, the restoration of the inner and subjective principle of morality, due to the doctrine of justification by faith. *Second*, the transfer of the idea of authority from the church to conscience and revelation. *Third*, the freedom and responsibility of the individual for his moral and spiritual salvation, thus setting aside human mediation and influence from without. *Fourth*, the separation of morality and religion, at least in their sanctions and object, if not in regard to their source or ultimate ground.

**2d. The Philosophical Reformation.**—The fundamental principle of the Cartesian philosophy, which was the original impulse of the philosophical reformation, was the same in its nature as that of the religious reformation. It was a revolt against dogmatic methods and authority, and the restoration of individual reason to its place in the determination of truth, with the implication which it carried along with its method, that knowledge and virtue are subjectively conditioned, that is, have a mental source, whatever may be said of other influences. Descartes began with philosophic doubt of every assertion which could not appear as clear and distinct truth. To him clear and distinct ideas were either those which had an intuitive origin and were the conditions of all thought, or those which followed necessarily from admitted truths. He would accept no others than such as could present these credentials. Hence he put to the severest test all beliefs about the existence of an external world, of matter, of a soul, of God. He found that he could doubt everything but the fact of the doubt, the fact of consciousness, and in this he found

necessarily implied his own existence. Hence the basal formula of his method and system was *Cogito, ergo sum* (I think or am conscious; therefore I exist.) From this he developed his belief in the existence of God, of matter and of the soul. In thus subtracting, or thinking away everything except consciousness, Descartes laid the foundation of modern Idealism which assumes the subjective method of treating knowledge and *a fortiori* the phenomena of morality. It altered the point of view predominant in scholasticism which asserted the principle of authority and permitted nothing to individual reason. Descartes emancipated the individual in philosophy as Luther did in religion, and so set up an internal principle as the criterion of truth. This reacted on the principles of Ethics and carried the idealistic impulse into that field until it terminated in the fully developed system of Kant and his school.

When Descartes came to discuss ethical problems directly, he seeks first after the manner of Greek ethics to determine the highest good, which he finds to be virtue and happiness, or freedom and blessedness. He combines the ideal of the Stoics and the Epicureans. There is in this two systems of morality; one empirical and determining the rules for the bodily life, rendering possible a control over the passions, and the other resting upon the good will and assuring the soul's independence and a spiritual felicity which depends upon the soul alone. This was carrying his dualism into Ethics. His doctrine of automatism, or the automatic nature of animal functions, prevented the success of this attempt, but it remained in Kant's view that pleasure is a necessary object of volition, and opposed the freedom of obedience to the sense of duty.

Descartes maintained firmly the freedom of the will, and owing to his identification of judgment and the will carried the doctrine so far as to assert responsibility for our beliefs, to at least a limited extent. The supreme motive to morality he made the love of God, coinciding in this position with the religious consciousness. He emphasized the limitations of nature imposed upon the human will and desires, and recommended as a

duty the adjustment of our desires to its inflexible laws rather than an attempt to change the order of the world. Herein was the Stoic element of his doctrine, and it determined the prominent characteristics of Spinoza's Ethics.

Descartes, however, had very little to say directly on the problem of ethics. He was most deeply interested in metaphysics and the theory of knowledge. His influence upon Ethics, therefore, was indirect and merely fortified by philosophic assumptions the general tendency of the reaction against scholasticism. Its chief influences were derived from the following: *First*, the establishment of consciousness as the ultimate criterion of truth and goodness. This was the assertion of reason, in opposition to authority, as the ground of knowledge and obligation. *Second*, the founding of Idealism and its subjective method. *Third*, the maintenance of the freedom of the will. *Fourth*, the assertion that virtue or the good will has a moral value on its own account and not merely as a means to happiness, though this is its natural consequence. *Fifth*, submission and adjustment of desire to the necessary order of nature. *Sixth*, the love of God as the chief motive of conduct, or condition of mind in which to live. These several momenta in the Cartesian system will be apparent to all who study its development.

In following now the subsequent development of ethical doctrine we can only select certain representatives of general schools. It is not necessary to detail the views of each author since we are not presenting a complete history of ethics. Hence we shall only outline the general direction of the main streams of thought, selecting for this purpose the Continental and the English movements, or the idealistic and the empirical schools, with their main representatives.

**3d. The Idealistic Movement.**—The chief representatives of this school include Spinoza, Leibnitz and Kant, all that need consideration in ascertaining the nature of modern ethical problems. They are regarded as idealistic because they set up moral principles of a decidedly subjective character, and superior

to mere physical naturalism, and develop Cartesianism to its logical consequences in the direction of idealistic methods. Omitting Malebranche, who is unimportant, we take up Spinoza.

1. SPINOZA.—Spinoza based his *Ethics* upon a thoroughly worked out system of metaphysics. In producing this he simply turned the dualism of Descartes into monism. Descartes held that there were two kinds of separate substances, mind and matter, each without any participation in the nature or qualities of the other. Extension was the essence of matter, and consciousness the essence of mind. The independence of matter which characterized mind was a ground for maintaining the freedom of the will, because it was the subject of its own phenomena. The existence of God was asserted as an absolute substance and the creator of matter and mind. But Spinoza started by denying the substantial nature of mind and matter. He simply took their distinctive qualities, extension and thought, and made them the attributes of a single substance, God, and dissolved dualism, by asserting pantheistic monism. The effect of this was to make man a mere mode of the Absolute, and so to destroy all possibility of the freedom of the will. Hence, Spinoza denied this freedom and maintained that man could not choose otherwise than he does on each particular occasion of choice. His actions are a mere product of the Absolute. From the same conception of dependence on God came the emphasis which Spinoza placed upon the limitations of the human will. The course of nature, according to him, is an inflexible one. It is a vast mechanism acting in accordance with laws which pay no regard to man's desires and ideals. Human nature is a part of this system, and human actions a result of it. Freedom is an illusion. Absolute good and evil do not exist. Praise and blame, as if the conduct of man could be otherwise than it is, are absurd. We must learn to be satisfied with the necessary course of nature. The highest good is a life according to this law of nature, which is also the law of reason. This Spinoza made "the intellectual love of God" (*amor intellectualis Dei*), or rational regard for the laws of the mechanical world, as it must be considered in his system.

Man's duty consists in freeing himself from the control of his passions, and his felicity comes from a reverent submission to his fate. How he can gain either of these ends is not clear from the principles of his system, and, moreover, it is hardly a misrepresentation to regard his "intellectual love of God" as mere scientific curiosity. It has the religious form of expression, but the materialistic pantheism of his philosophy, and the purely speculative interest of his thought eviscerate that formula of all its religious import, and with the denial of free will there was nothing left but his own somewhat romantic and sublime character to adorn the theory.

Spinoza's influence upon the main problems of theoretical Ethics was chiefly negative. He was among the first to boldly challenge the current conceptions of free will and responsibility. He could do so more effectively because, unlike scholastic theology, which had behind its denial of free will, at times, the personality and grace of God, to rob the theory of its practical consequences, Spinoza, in spite of his pious phraseology, represents a purely materialistic conception of the universe, with man a mere mode of it, a bubble on a shoreless ocean of force, floating for a moment on its troubled surface, and disappearing forever at the touch of the first wind of change. His thought was the mechanical side of Cartesian philosophy, representing the scientific reaction against the spiritualistic character of mediæval ideas, though expressed in mystical and religious language, and in this way brought to the front a complete antithesis to the benevolent and providential scheme of orthodox theology. Consequently, his influence upon ethical speculation and the practical moral consciousness, was to present inexorable limitations to the fulfillment of natural desires and the implacable laws of nature, to which man must adjust himself if he would attain felicity. Modern evolution emphasizes the same conception, and no system, except Spinoza's, has so comprehensively stated the finitude and dependence of man upon the vast infinitude of forces which we call the world. The realization of this condition is the incentive to humility and obedience, which are the special virtues of Spin-

oza's thought, and which have especially recommended him to the scientific student. Hence, the calm, stoical composure with which Spinoza contemplated the laws of nature, and urged the control of passion in order to live in harmony with them. The moral consciousness which his pantheism and materialism produced was one of submission to the inevitable, and represents the whole modern reaction against the supernatural.

The elements of his system were as follows.—*First*, pantheistic monism with its reduction of man to a mode or phenomenon of the Absolute. *Second*, the denial of free will or the power of alternative choice. *Third*, man's highest good consists in his freedom from passion, or from desires that are in conflict with the order of nature. *Fourth*, the inculcation of that moral consciousness which humbly and obediently yields to the inexorable laws of nature. These principles exhibit a system quite in contrast with ordinary views and in particular are opposed to the ethics of Kant.

2. LEIBNITZ.—The ethical doctrine of Leibnitz was a return to some of the fundamental positions abandoned by Spinoza, though intended to conciliate Spinoza's doctrine with the theological presumptions of the age. Thus, Leibnitz retained monism as a philosophic Theory: but it was *atomistic* as opposed to *pantheistic* monism, and in this way he sustained a doctrine which made possible the freedom of the will. The fundamental unit of existence was a *monad*, which he regarded as indivisible and permanent. It was distinguished from the Lucretian atom in that its nature was not material. Hence, Leibnitz regarded the basis of existence as immaterial. He asserted a difference between monads, but it was a difference in degrees of activity. Their substance was the same; their modes were different. Hence, a series of gradations, representing the law of continuity, existed between the unconscious, or so-called material monad and the conscious or spiritual monad. But it was the independent existence of the monad and its power of self-activity without determination from the influence of any other monad (Spinoza's freedom of the Absolute) that enabled Leibnitz to maintain the freedom of



the will. It was in this fundamental position that he differed so radically from his predecessor. He had his own special theory about the close relation between the lower and higher forms of volition, of the gradual development of rational activity from the instinctive, but he based his whole theory of morality upon the freedom of the will, which he saw was necessary, if Ethics was to be regarded as possible. He distinguished, however, between the *freedom of indifference*, or indeterminism (*equilibre*), as it was called, and the freedom of determinism, which meant that the subject had a predominant inclination in one direction, though not fatally nor externally determined. Hence, Leibnitz denied both necessitarianism and the freedom of indifference and maintained a theory of determinism which meant that volition was caused by the subject and that it was according to the law of the subject's nature. Thus he admitted the predominant tendencies of the individual's character while he affirmed free, original and spontaneous volition. This freedom he made to be action in conformity with reason and in this way recognized the main contention of Spinoza.

When he came to consider the object of conduct he recognized happiness as the highest good. But this he seems at the same time to have regarded as the accompaniment of perfection. Pleasure, he said, is the feeling of perfection, pain, of imperfection. He sometimes speaks of happiness and perfection as if they were identical, or as if they together constituted the highest good. Instinct sought this as a *natural* object of volition, but reason only could seek it as a *moral* object; because instinct was not a sure guide. It was confused and indistinct in its operation. His whole system also bore a close relation to his theory of optimism.

3. KANT.—The philosophy of Immanuel Kant represents the confluence of two great streams of thought, those of Locke and Descartes. From Locke he obtained the empirical element of his system, which appears in the limitation of knowledge to experience, and from Descartes the idealistic basis which led to the assertion of the a priori conditions of experience, represented in the forms of perception (space and time) and the categories of

the understanding (Quantity, Quality, Modality, and Relation). Thus he admitted "intuitive," "innate," "a priori," or underived principles of thought, though he confined them to the field of experience, and would not extend them beyond it. They were *immanent* in experience instead of *transcending* it. That is to say, whatever fundamental principles of truth were to be recognized, they were *laws* of thought rather than *ideas* distinct from sense deliverances whether inner or outer. But having made the forms of perception and the categories, or conditions of consciousness, subjective and ideal, he placed idealism upon a firmer and more radical footing than ever before, and so prepared the way for a more thorough-going idealism in Ethics. There were also subordinate contributions from different members of the same school tending in the same direction. Hume determined his scepticism in a large measure especially on the side of metaphysics, Berkeley had disputed the existence of matter, and Hume on the same grounds disputed that of mind, causality, personal identity, etc., leaving nothing but "impressions," or experience, as the data of knowledge. Kant follows this up with the distinction between noumena, or things in themselves (*Dinge an sich*) and phenomena, or appearances (*Erscheinung*), asserting that the latter are all we know, while the former are unknowable, though asserted to exist. His scepticism thus applied to the nature of things, but not to their effect upon the ego or subject.

No less striking was Hume's influence upon Kant's ethical doctrine. Hume had denied the connection of reason both with moral distinctions and with the motivation of the will, and affirmed it only of a "moral sense" which was a feeling or emotional function. This was subjective while reason was occupied with the objective. Farther, Hume denied that conduct, externally considered, could have either merit or demerit, and thus taking up the non-moral character of all events and actions independent of the will, Kant was forced, like Hume, to place morality in the motive or condition of the will. The stoical spirit and severity of Spinoza are repeated in the rigidity of Kant's law of duty, though they were probably influenced less

by Spinoza's philosophy than by the temperament and early training of Kant himself. The monistic and idealistic tendency of Kant were affected by both Spinoza and Leibnitz, though it was the outcome of the psychology of Leibnitz more than of the metaphysics of Spinoza. From Leibnitz also he probably drew the conceptions which aided him in sustaining the doctrine of freedom. But there were general tendencies acting in this direction by their antithesis to every doctrine of free will. These were the natural consequences of two movements, the scientific and the philosophical. On the one hand, the renaissance had brought with it a strong admiration of the natural in Greek life, and Copernican astronomy and Newtonian gravitation had immensely extended the conception of physical laws, destroying the last traces of the ancient theory that the heavenly bodies were of a divine essence. The physical sciences had received large accessions in the discoveries of Pascal, Huyghens, Bernoulli, and others, so that the sense of mystery was fast disappearing before the light of natural knowledge, and a sharply defined mechanical conception of the world was supplanting the spiritualistic theology of scholasticism. This was the purely scientific movement, and Kant shared in it to the extent that, simultaneously with La Place he outlined a nebular hypothesis to account for the origin of the solar system upon physical principles. On the other hand, Descartes stimulated by his interest in mathematics and mechanics, had reduced all phenomena of the universe, except those of consciousness, to mechanical laws, and included in them all the actions of organic life and the animal world below the rational intelligence of man. Animals were automata and no more conscious in their actions than all unconscious beings. At least consciousness was not the cause of their actions. Consequently both the scientific and the philosophic movement had produced a widespread tendency toward materialism and its implications that all events were to be reduced to invariable and mechanical laws. Leibnitz felt this, as we have seen, to the extent that he denied the freedom of indifference and admitted only a freedom that could be consistent

with predominant inclinations in a given direction. Kant, therefore, came when he must either abandon Ethics to the physical sciences or vindicate the freedom of the will in order to save morality. This fact made that doctrine the key to his ethical theory, while its obverse side was found in the "categorical imperative," which, as a fact of human consciousness was both the proof of freedom and the essential element of all morality. These complementary aspects of his doctrine, the categorical imperative and the freedom of the will, were attempts at correcting the dangerous tendencies of the age; the former to represent a principle for regulating the lawlessness of the human will as it began to demand political freedom, and to stamp conduct with the nobility of the ancient virtues practiced in subordination to social welfare, and the latter to counteract the consequences of a mechanical and materialistic conception of the world.

Starting with the ideas of duty and freedom Kant had to give his ethical system a firm foundation, and this was the more necessary because of the negative result of his *Metaphysics*. It was, in fact, this negative result that prompted him to the reconstruction of Ethics. Like Plato, the object of his philosophy centred in moral problems, but, unlike Plato, he did not seek their basis in *Metaphysics*. His dissatisfaction with the Leibnitzo-Wollfian dogmatism and the sceptical influence of Hume, taken with the general reaction against scholasticism, which had based everything upon theological and metaphysical assumptions, had induced him to analyze the fundamental conceptions of Ontology, Theology, and Psychology. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, therefore, he denied the sufficiency of the arguments for the existence of God, the existence of the soul, and the freedom of the will. On these the previous systems of Ethics were founded, and hence, in order to avoid a dogmatic foundation for its principles, Kant saw no other way to treat the questions than to destroy the speculative foundations upon which scholasticism had built them. He resolved to reconstruct Ethics without any transcendental *Metaphysics* for its support.

But having affirmed that reason was not adequate to the task of proving the speculative ideas of science and philosophy, he would seem to have cut off his return to a basis for morality. Nevertheless, Kant makes the effort by drawing a radical distinction between two functions of reason, the theoretical or speculative, and the practical or postulative. Pure or speculative reason, he maintained, could not assure us of the fundamental principles of Ontology, Theology, and Psychology, though practical reason might do so. This position was decidedly paradoxical. It will appear less so, however, when we suppose that by pure or theoretical reason Kant meant the explanatory function of consciousness, which could not give an assurance of its objects as inexpugnable as the practical reason which postulated them as facts to account for phenomena, but did not pretend to investigate their grounds. In spite of this, however, the distinction will always appear unsatisfactory, and gives rise to confusion. But its motive was an intelligible one, namely, to reconstruct Ethics independently of current metaphysical assumptions. Here began modern rationalism in Theology and Ethics, and with it the secularization of morality, or the separation of Ethics and religion.

After the destructive conclusions of the first part of his philosophy, Kant showed a double tendency in the reconstruction of Ethics. First, he had to indicate a function for establishing morality upon a basis independent of metaphysics; second, his speculative interests induced him to postulate from practical reason the ideas rejected by speculative reason, but now asserted, not as *conditions* of morality, but as *implications* of it, or supplementary truths in which it culminated. The first of these gave morality a psychological ground, and the second compensated for the removal of its dependence on Metaphysics. Each of these aspects must be considered separately.

The principle upon which Kant found a basis for Ethics was the distinction between the *natural* and the *moral*, and the denial that the latter could be deduced from the former. Having reduced all the phenomena of sense and of the understand-

ing; that is, of nature and of consciousness, in so far as they were events objective to reason, to the law of causality or necessity, Kant's problem was to find a fact which could not be so reduced. He sought this in the categorical imperative, which was the ideal of practical reason, the declaration of what *ought* to be, as contrasted with what merely *is*. The natural sciences, including physics and empirical psychology, treated all events as the natural effect of causes which did not represent volition as the initiating antecedent, and hence were the product of necessity. They explain phenomena, and cannot legislate for the will. We cannot say that any event "ought" to be; we can only say that it is, and that under the conditions it *must* be. But if the science of Ethics be possible we must be able to assert that some *end ought* to be realized; some object must be unconditionally commanded, and this can in no case be derived merely from the facts of observation. This desideratum Kant found in the sense of duty, or categorical imperative, which is unconditionally binding, simply because it is an a priori product of practical reason. Hence Ethics is possible because it imposes a law, and does not explain facts. Morality is thus independent of the natural and necessary.

Kant's next step was to formulate this law, which should be free from every element of experience. The first and purely formal statement of it was that "*we should act so that the maxim of our conduct could be made a law for all rational beings*;" that is, a principle of universal legislation. This was his most general test for the character of any rule of action, and though it was merely negative in showing the suicidal nature of any principle which did not conform to it, the maxim was too abstract to satisfy all claims made upon a moral law. Hence Kant undertook to complete it by indicating the object to which the law was to be applied. It was not sufficient that action should be merely uniform, consistent, or according to law. The object concerned should also be taken into account. Purely formal obedience to it, which expressed the good will, might indicate the character of the agent, and satisfy all that could be de-

manded of the law for the subject, but it did not suffice to supply a complete criterion in the complexities of social life. Hence for more concrete purposes, Kant adds another conception to the law, so that it will recognize the persons concerned in the exercise of volition. It then reads that the law of morality commands that *we should treat man, whether in our own, or in the person of others, as an end in himself and not merely as a means.* By this formula Kant can test all moral laws regarding person and property, so as to see whether they consist with the proper respect due to personality. At the same time this principle forces utility as a criterion into the background, though it does not antagonize it, and brings forward the good will as the only absolute value which Ethics can admit. This unconditional imperative, then, is equivalent to enjoining virtue for its own sake as it makes that quality to consist purely in formal obedience to the law. At this stage of the problem Kant lays no stress upon the external end to be realized in morality. He does not seem to feel that the end is the important element in virtue, but that it consists only in the attitude of the mind or will toward whatever end it may choose; that is, merely in the will to live according to the law of duty. Hence he wholly repudiates pleasure as a rational object of volition. He does not deny that pleasure is a good, he only denies that it is a moral good. It is the *natural* and *necessary* object of all volition, while a *moral* object must represent the free autonomy of the will. Hence though pleasure might be a material element in conduct it is not the object which constitutes its moral worth. This must be derived from conscientiousness, or as Kant expresses it, from formal obedience to the categorical imperative. Thus neither instinct nor desire, but only rational volition out of respect for moral law can constitute virtue. This is a quality which every one whether wise or ignorant could be expected to exhibit, and hence Kant could hold all persons up to the same degree of responsibility. With the utilitarian or hedonist knowledge is necessary to the right pursuit of pleasure, because this end is complicated with the various conditions of the physical world,

while the good will is not affected by these circumstances and requires no special knowledge of nature to condition it. This position of Kant gave idealism complete control of the ethical problem by making it consist in the determination of the will alone, which could act under the law of duty without regard to the amount of material knowledge possessed by the subject.

This capacity of reason to act according to a law, to produce a categorical imperative, or sense of duty, was taken as proof of its capacity to obey the law, and this was its freedom. What Kant made clear in this view, was the fact that the consciousness of duty was absurd and anomalous, unless we could assume man's power to do what reason thus commanded. If man cannot do what his reason (conscience) tells him he ought to do, the sense of duty contradicts his nature, and he cannot be said to possess responsibility at all. In this way Kant sought to establish the fact of freedom. But the mechanical philosophy of the day, the Leibnitzian conception of predominant inclinations affecting the will, and Kant's own concessions to natural philosophy in his conceptions of mental phenomena, led him to assert a paradoxical theory in regard to the will, which maintained, on the one side, the freedom, and on the other, the necessity of volition. Thus, Kant affirmed that phenomenally the will was determined, but noumenally, or as a thing in itself, it was free. In the antinomy regarding freedom, Kant found, as he thought, that he had to choose between the law of causation and freedom, and so he solved the problem by the distinction between things in themselves and phenomena, holding that the will, in so far as it was a noumenon, was free, and not subject to the law of causality, but that in so far as it was a phenomenon it was not free, but determined. Stripped of Kantian verbiage and technicalities this view can be made intelligible only by saying that *volition* (empirical will) as an event in time is determined and subject to the natural law of causation, but that the will (transcendental will) as a subject and not in time, is free and undetermined. Clumsy as his way of putting the matter was, nevertheless it had the merit, first of reinforcing common conviction in regard to the fact



of freedom, and second of indicating the source of philosophic illusion regarding it, in that he distinguished between the causality of volitions as events and the causality of the will as a subject, the latter not falling in the series of phenomena which come under the law of causation.

The second and supplementary aspect of his doctrine is quite as interesting, as an attempt to correct the excessively formal characteristic of the first part. Kant was aware of the rigorous and stoical demands upon the individual made by his doctrine of conscience, and though it was not so offensive as the severity of Spinoza's system with its pantheism and denial of immortality, it took away the concessions to happiness made by Leibnitz, admitted even by Spinoza, and recognized by the common consciousness of the age, and perhaps, of all ages, as too precious to be sacrificed to the logical necessities of a theory. Hence after apparently repudiating the connection of happiness with morality and certainly denying its importance as a measure of virtue, in order to prove that the formal law of duty was the essential element of moral goodness, Kant turns around and recognizes that happiness is properly connected with virtue. But he denies the identity of the two qualities of action, and so maintains that they are synthetically, not analytically, connected, to use his phraseology. The highest good he asserts is virtue, but it is necessarily united with happiness in the ideal or perfect state. But the imperfection of man and his present condition is the circumstance that necessitates his dependence upon the purely formal nature of the law and gives rise to two postulates which the theoretical side of Kant's philosophy could not prove. They are the immortality of the soul and the existence of God.

In the first place the moral law requires the union of virtue and happiness which can be realized only by perfect holiness, or perfect conformity of will to the law of duty. But man's imperfection is such that the conflict between the demands of the law and his own love of happiness makes it necessary to have an indefinite time in order to sanctify his will. He can only realize a progressive approximation to perfection or holiness, and to

attain this he must have immortality. In the second place, since the moral law commands nothing but conformity to itself, and since at the same time there is a natural and necessary connection between the *ideas* of virtue and happiness, but not between their phenomenal reality, Kant asserts that the existence of God is necessary in order to establish their *real* connection in a more perfect state of existence. God is thus necessary to determine the harmony between morality and happiness. In this way Kant presented his celebrated *moral*, as opposed to the *speculative*, arguments for immortality and the existence of God. They were assumptions to complete the nature of morality, not the grounds or proof of it. Consequently in his system Ethics culminated in religion, but was not dependent upon it. This, of course, was intended as a conciliation of conflicting interests. Whatever it may have done in this direction, or failed to do, it certainly preserved the integrity of the moral law without coming into open conflict with the religious consciousness, and fell into line with the spirit of the reformation. Kant's good will was the philosophic conception for Luther's justification by faith, if not in the relations it bore, certainly in the freedom which it implied, and in the recognition of personality which it asserted as opposed to the doctrine of external works.

The summary of Kant's doctrine will contain the following contributions. *First*, the thoroughly idealistic character of his Ethics as compared with the half-way theories of the time. *Second*, the sceptical attitude of his philosophy toward metaphysics, which forces idealism into Ethics if morality is to be saved at all. *Third*, the doctrine that morality is based upon freedom and the categorical imperative, the latter as a fact being a proof of the former. *Fourth*, the constitution of virtue in the free conformity of the will to duty, and without regard to happiness. *Fifth*, the postulation of immortality as a condition of realizing the ideal connection between virtue and happiness, since it requires an indefinite time for its achievement. *Sixth*, the postulation of God's existence as a condition of maintaining the harmony between morality and happiness.

For the sake of understanding the modern problems of Ethics it is not necessary to pursue the history of the idealistic movement any farther. It attains its maturity in Kant, as a purely subjective doctrine. Later developments only eliminate its difficulties and inconsistencies while asserting that the essential principle of virtue, so far as it represents character as distinct from external conduct, must be found in the quality of will and conscientiousness which Kant's categorical imperative embodied. Kant developed to its highest pitch the importance of the *motive* to morality, and did so to the extent that he apparently ignored the value of the material end, or the inevitableness of the tendency to use pleasure as a criterion of good conduct. Hence, the purely idealistic movement, which was independent of genetic theories on the one hand, and of eudæmonistic doctrines on the other, may be said to have culminated in Kant. We may, therefore, turn to the empirical school and its contributions.

**4th. The English Movement.**—This whole school is characterized by the historical method, though it is divided into two opposing tendencies, the empirical and the intuitive. It is not necessary, however, to follow each tendency throughout its development. It is sufficient to know for what they stand. The empirical school maintained and maintains that all moral conceptions are derived from experience, or from associations of pleasure and pain with certain forms of conduct, and it is usually identified with the position of Utilitarianism, that happiness is the only good. The intuitive school maintained that the principles of morality are implanted in the constitution of human nature, and are not the product of mere experience. This school was sometimes identified with the doctrine of Utilitarianism, and sometimes it was not. Its main tenet was the original as opposed to the derived nature of morality. It also subdivides into the *intellectual* and the *æsthetic* or *moral-sense* school.

**1. THE EMPIRICISTS.**—This school comprises the earlier and the later forms. The earlier is represented by Hobbes and Locke,

the later by Bentham, Mill and Spencer, with men of minor note. Hobbes and Locke, however, are all that we can consider for the present, in giving the historical development of the ethical problem. Both gave a very considerable impulse to the empirical movement, though their influence was not the same in its nature.

The chief feature of Hobbes' philosophy was its political doctrine. But it contained a theory of right which was not only founded upon pleasure, but also represented conventionalism in a peculiarly offensive form. His system started in a materialistic psychology, but its strength did not lie in that fact. Its importance came from the particularly pessimistic view which he took of human nature, and the means necessary to secure social order. Men in a state of nature, he maintained, were in a state of war. Every man was against every other man (*homo homini lupus*), and each pursued his own interests without any restraints, except such as the fear of a stronger availed to produce. Selfishness is the only primitive spring to conduct, and pleasure its only object. There is no such a thing as social instinct moving men to seek a general good. They are solely under the influence of individual interest, and being in perpetual conflict could succeed only in maintaining a state of anarchy. In this condition, might and right coincide, and no man has any rights or duties. These are purely the product of social organization, which Hobbes maintains must be brought about either by compact or by conquest. Either alternative involves the necessity of absolute obedience to a sovereign who becomes the state for all practical purposes. "The sovereign is itself bound by the Law of Nature to seek the good of the people, which cannot be separated from its own good, but it is responsible to God alone for its observance of these laws. Its commands are the final measure of right and wrong for the outward conduct of its subjects, and ought to be absolutely obeyed by every one so long as it affords him protection, and does not threaten serious harm to him personally; since to dispute its dictates would be the first step towards anarchy, the one paramount peril outweighing all particular defects in legislation

and administration."\* Hobbes carried the doctrine of absolute obedience so far as to affirm that, if the sovereign declared Mohammedanism or any other faith to be the state religion, it was the duty of the subject to obey. Though he alludes to the Law of Nature as binding upon the sovereign, he means by this the law of self-preservation, and not any social tendency of men, or love of their fellows. Consequently, his system confers as absolute power as could be imagined, over the character of what shall be called right. The doctrine coincided at the time with the interest of the monarchical party in England, and was supported by the conservatives against the liberal tendencies of the Puritans, whose doctrine of individual responsibility to conscience was especially offensive to Hobbes. His theory greatly influenced public sentiment, on the doctrine of the "divine right of kings," or at least gave it the support of philosophic authority, and so had the double effect of reinforcing the reaction toward external authority as the guide of conduct, and of giving morality more of a conventional character than the orthodox mind of the age was willing to admit. Though the school which Hobbes heads did not accept the radically despotic doctrine that the sovereign could be the source of moral law, it turned the general principle of his system to account in explaining the influence exerted by jurisprudence in establishing social customs, and so in giving form to the general conscience. The boldness and revolutionary character of the doctrine was the agency which revived ethical speculation, as can be seen in both the intellectual and the æsthetic schools, which endeavored to refute both the conventional and the egoistic features of his theory. Also its influence can be traced in the doctrines of Bain and Spencer, that conscience originates, at least partly, in political authority and restraints. The essential feature of the theory, however, was that morality can be the *creation of will* in which Hobbes restored the theological doctrine without the religious reverence that gave it both force and ideality. It became a political instrument in the hands of arbitrary power, precisely as Sophistic doctrine became

\* Sidgwick, *History of Ethics*, p. 165.

in the hands of the Thirty Tyrants. The reaction which came in the intellectual and moral sense schools measured the extent of both the repugnance and the dangers of Hobbes' doctrine.

Locke did not exactly follow the lines of Hobbes' speculations. The author of the celebrated treatise on Toleration could hardly have consented to any form of absolutism, and hence his sympathies with individual liberty would incline him to take another view more consistent with natural rights. But he nevertheless gave the empirical movement quite as strong, if not a stronger, impulse than Hobbes, though he did it from another standpoint, and without involving his theory in the meshes of practical politics. This he did by his general theory of knowledge whose fundamental principle was experience as opposed alike to authority and to intuition. Locke denied the existence of "innate ideas," both speculative and practical. All theoretical ideas he derived from sensation and reflection, meaning by these external and internal perception: all practical ideas, or moral maxims he derived from experiences in pleasure and pain. What Locke really called attention to was the fact that moral principles are abstract and complex instead of being simple, and hence require to be reduced to their concrete elements, which he found to be pleasure and pain. Others had emphasized the influence of these phenomena as well as he, but they did not mean thereby to antagonize a doctrine of natural and inborn morality. Hence the peculiar characteristic of Locke's position was that he used the fact to prove the purely experiential character of moral principles, and ever since his time the hedonistic theory has been identified with the endeavor to develop ethical maxims from the pursuit of ends which in themselves did not contain the peculiar quality which is generally expressed by morality or virtue.

2. THE INTELLECTUALISTS.—This school comprises Cudworth, Cumberland, Price, and Clarke. The common characteristic of it is its hostility to the conventionalism of Hobbes on the one hand, and to the experientialism of Locke on the other. Hobbes had founded morality upon the *will* and Locke upon the

*emotions*. The intellectualists rejected these sources and referred moral principles to *reason*, and made them constitutional to it. They were influenced by the traditional doctrine that conscience was mainly intellectual in its character, and so attempted to reconstruct Ethics upon that basis.

Cudworth's contribution to the problem was his *Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*. This title is a sufficient indication of the position which he took, as against the theory of Hobbes. He denied the origin of morality, or moral distinctions, in will of any kind, whether divine or human, and asserted that it was a part of the eternal nature of things. This moral law was an object of reason and not of feeling. But what is interesting in his view is its thoroughly metaphysical and objective character. It is very far removed from the idealistic doctrine in that it founds morality in the nature of *things* rather than in the nature of *mind*, and thus can set up an objective set of relations as cognita of reason rather than either products of arbitrary power or reflexes of sense and feeling.

Cumberland expounded his philosophy in a work entitled *De Legibus Naturæ*, which was designed as an attack on Hobbes, and in which he asserted that the laws of nature were represented by "immutably true propositions, regulative of voluntary actions as to the choice of good and the avoidance of evil, and which carry with them an obligation to outward acts of obedience, even apart from civil laws and from any considerations of compacts constituting governments." Civil law can be nothing but an effective means of enforcing the laws of nature. All these laws of nature he thought could be comprehended under one general principle—the law of benevolence—the obligation to promote the happiness of all rational agents. Thus his position is a double reply to Hobbes. The assertion of a law of nature was opposed to Hobbes' conventionalism and the recognition of benevolence as the basis of this law was opposed to the egoistic individualism of Hobbes.

Clarke takes the same general view that the sanctions of morality are independent of legislations either divine or human, and

in regard to their self-evidence compares them to mathematical truths which were generally admitted to be intuitive. Price also presses the self-evidence of moral truths and asserts that the ideas of right and wrong, ought, duty, etc., are simple notions incapable of definition or analysis, thereby disputing the consequences of Locke's doctrine.

3. THE *ÆSTHETIC* OR MORAL SENSE SCHOOL.—This school comprises Hutcheson, Shaftesbury, and Hume, with some others of less important note. They represent a tendency to combat equally the conventionalism of Hobbes, the empiricism of Locke, and the rationalism of the intellectualists. They agree in maintaining the existence of a moral sense whose function it is to perceive what is right and wrong *per se*, as opposed to mere obedience to law from the motive of self-interest. On the other hand, its object was not a relation of things as in the intellectual school, but was a relation of men; that is, universal happiness. The fundamental principle of moral sense was *sympathy* or social instinct. Thus there was a double opposition to Hobbes. First, in so far as moral sense was an endowment of the individual it was opposed both to Locke's empiricism and to Hobbes' conventionalism. Second, in so far as it represented social instinct it opposed Hobbes' egoism. Again, in so far as it was a sense as opposed to reason and with its object in happiness the doctrine combated the pure rationalism of the intellectualists, and represents the tendency toward the hedonistic and utilitarian doctrine of later times.

Shaftesbury published his views in a work entitled *An Inquiry concerning Virtue and Merit*, in which he attacked the egoistic interpretations of the good by asserting the naturalness of the social affections. He uses the term moral sense to describe their general function and admits an element of judgment or reason in it. But he placed more emphasis upon the felicitic character of its object and the universality of its existence so as to show the social nature of morality.

Hutcheson emphasizes the view that the moral sense has had no growth or history, but is a natural endowment of man. It



is mainly of the nature of the affections and represents the approval of right and the disapproval of wrong actions. Sympathy or disinterested affection is the mainspring of virtuous conduct, and reason plays only a subordinate part in its functions. He wholly denies the moral character of self-love, though admitting its harmony with benevolence. This prepared him for the admissions of the scholastic distinction between *formal* and *material* goodness. An act was formally good, he held, when it sprang from benevolent affection, and "materially good when it tends to the interest of the system, whatever the affections of the agent." This is an anticipation of one feature of Kant and a preparation for Hume's doctrine.

Hume developed the moral-sense theory to its utmost degree of perfection, and the elaborate analysis which he gave the ethical problem makes his system worthy of a careful, though brief, discussion. In the first place, he began with a completely sceptical system of metaphysics, discrediting the dogmatic and theological doctrine in regard to the existence of mind and matter. But when he came to Ethics his scepticism seems to play no special part in his theory. There was no reason that it should do so because he opposed the idea that morality represented anything in the nature of phenomena independent of the will. He founds his Ethics, however, upon the psychological classification of phenomena into impressions and ideas. The former represent the objects of sense, including the feelings of pleasure and pain; the latter represent objects of the understanding or reason, and so denote relations of things. His starting point, therefore, is the denial that moral distinctions are produced by reason. "Reason," he held, "is the discovery of truth or falsehood," and not of the praiseworthy or blameworthy. It deals with matters of fact and relations of ideas, and so with objects and relations not determined by consciousness. On the other hand, morality is wholly an affair of the will and the affections. Its function is the distribution of praise and blame, and its object pleasure and pain. Thus it had to deal with the emotions. Hence he wholly denied the position of

Cudworth and the Cambridge Platonists, that right and wrong represented anything in the nature of things apart from consciousness and the will. Hume emphasized his denial of the intellectualist doctrine by showing that the same effects produced by inanimate and irrational beings were not adjudged as either moral or immoral. Actions must be caused by a will to have moral quality. But since this quality cannot be found in the nature of things, the objective relations of phenomena, it must be found in the *motive*. Here is idealism pure and simple; only Hume refuses to attach merit to the "sense of morality," or duty as a motive. This merit must come from some natural affection of the soul other than reason or the sense of duty. The way is prepared here for Kant's good-will, though it is not qualified in the same way. Hume thus refutes the intellectualists while maintaining the ultimately natural character of moral distinctions. But he falls into line with the hedonists in making pleasure the end of action, and partly with Hobbes in his doctrine of the *conventional* though not *arbitrary* nature of justice. Having maintained that virtue and justice do not represent any relation in things apart from will and that justice cannot exist until a social order has been established, he proceeds to show that it is wholly dependent upon the contract or compact that introduces that order. Justice is thus artificial and also the obligation which it originates. The convention, however, on which justice rests is not arbitrary, but expresses the natural agreement of men, formed by their social instincts, to establish society, and to maintain security of life and property. Sympathy is the bond which holds the social organism together. But in spite of this view Hume agreed with Hobbes in making "self-interest the original motive to the establishment of justice, but sympathy with public interest is the source of the moral approbation which attends that virtue." In the latter aspect he therefore falls into line with Hutcheson and Shaftesbury. But in so far as he made virtue and justice in the social order a product of convention and the sense of duty the result of the same, he combined the doctrines of Hobbes and Locke, and laid the

foundation of modern empiricism, as represented in Bain and Spencer, and evolutionists generally. But he stands midway between them and Kant in the fact that his moral sense is a natural foundation upon which experience and convention had to build. On the one hand, Hume anticipated idealism in showing that morality was not a quality of external events, and that it was constituted solely by the motive, or disposition of will, though he made its object pleasure. On the other hand, he outlined empiricism by declaring for the conventional nature of justice, of conscience, and all rules affecting the security of life and property. But when taken in all its phases his system will be found to reflect the principles of several schools, marking the transition to more modern doctrines. The summary of his views will bring out this character of his system. We may state this as follows:

*First*, Hume denies the rationalism of Cudworth and the intellectualists. *Second*, he limits the object matter of morality to the feelings or emotions. *Third*, he asserts a doctrine of moral sense which contradicts both Hobbes and Locke. *Fourth*, since morality cannot consist in a law or relation of things, external events, it must consist wholly in motive. *Fifth*, the motive which determines the quality of virtue is something other than the "sense of its morality," and must be some natural affection. *Sixth*, the conventional nature of the social organism gives an artificial though not an arbitrary nature to justice. *Seventh*, though personal interest originates this convention sympathy is the influence which seals it and determines the feeling of approbation. *Eighth*, conscience, or the "sense of morality," is a product of social convention and represents a purely cognitive, not a motive, function in the determination of morality. *Ninth*, pleasure or utility is the object of all action and the criterion of its goodness.

4. CONCLUSION.—It is not necessary to follow the history of English ethical problems beyond Hume, farther than to remark that his doctrine may be the starting point of several opposing systems. On the one hand, the emphasis of one of his

principles terminates in Kant; the development of another produces Bentham and Mill. The last two made pleasure the sole criterion of morality, Bentham, however, holding that pleasures differ only in quantity or degree, and Mill that they differ in quality or kind as well as in quantity. Another aspect of Hume's theory anticipates the main position of evolution, while the many elements taken together and harmonized might originate a complete syncretistic or eclectic theory of morality. He touched upon all the main problems of modern ethics and suggests the attitudes which may be taken regarding them. From his time they become progressively complex as the analysis of their various elements proceeds, and represent the questions which the moralist of the present has to meet. What they are we may best illustrate by a careful summary, which shall outline for us the many problems we have to discuss in the present work. The following, therefore, will represent the questions to be considered in the modern science of Ethics:

*First*, there is the ultimate or highest good, or the question regarding the ultimate end of conduct, whether it is pleasure or perfection, or both, or some other more defensible object. Subordinate to this problem is the one regarding what men *do* seek, and what they *ought* to seek, if obligation be possible. *Second*, there is the question regarding *what* is right or moral after the end has been determined, since the right has to do with the means to the end. The question *why* it is right also comes in as a problem, but it is identical with the first-mentioned case. *Third*, there is the question regarding the metaphysical basis of Ethics, including the theological problems of God's existence, his nature, and the relation of his will to the moral law. *Fourth*, there is the question regarding the relation of moral law to external authority, whether divine or human, and which involves the question whether it is conventional or natural. *Fifth*, there is the question in regard both to the nature and the origin of conscience; whether it is simple or complex, and whether it is original, and implanted, or acquired and developed. *Sixth*, there is farther the question as to the authority of conscience, its falli-

bility or infallibility. This problem, however, is a receding echo of scholasticism. *Seventh*, there is the problem of the freedom of the will and responsibility, involving the question as to the causes of conduct, man's relation to environment and to his ancestors, or the influences in time and space which may be supposed to impose limitations upon his will. *Eighth*, there are the various specific theories of Ethics combining these several problems in different ways. *Ninth*, there is the question regarding the nature of virtue or moral goodness, whether it consists in a quality of will, or a quality of conduct, or both. *Tenth*, there is the question of the relation of motives to conduct, (a) whether they are causes of it or mere concomitants, and (b) whether they are elements determining its ethical character or not. *Eleventh*, there are the specific problems of practical Ethics concerning the nature, obligation, and limits of the various virtues, such as veracity, justice, chastity, etc. There are numerous other questions which might be stated, but they are either less important than those we have mentioned, or they are subordinate aspects of more general problems. But such as have been enumerated indicate how complex the ethical question has become in the process of development, and how careful must be the analysis if we expect to give it any adequate answer.

*References.*—Sidgwick: *History of Ethics*; Erdmann: *History of Philosophy*; Ueberweg: *History of Philosophy*; Kuno Fischer: *Geschichte der Neueren Philosophie*; Wundt: *Ethik*; Ziegler: *Christliche Ethik*; Martineau: *Types of Ethical Theory*; Jodl: *Geschichte der Ethik*; Windelband: *Geschichte der Philosophie*; Falckenberg: *History of Philosophy* (Translation by A. C. Armstrong); Schwegler: *History of Philosophy* (Translation by J. H. Stirling). See also articles in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* under the appropriate names and subjects.

## CHAPTER III.

### ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES

**I. INTRODUCTORY.**—We have found that Ethics as a science investigates questions concerning right and wrong, man's moral nature, and the ultimate end of conduct, and that it is especially interested in the ground and validity of the various moral rules imposed by society and conscience upon the individual to regulate his behavior. These questions can, perhaps, be reduced to three or four different forms. The first is whether there *is* any duty, virtue, morality, or obligation at all. The second is, *why* such and such rules are made obligatory, conditionally or unconditionally, or what are the grounds upon which moral obligation rests. The third is, *how* we come to know what is moral. This is the problem of the origin and development of moral consciousness. The fourth concerns the application of moral rules to practical life, or the conditions under which they may be held to be valid. It is the second and the third questions, however, that occupy the largest portion of the field of theoretical Ethics, and to them we shall have to give most of our attention in the first part of this treatise. The answer to the first question is an answer to scepticism and can be made easy or difficult according as we simplify or confuse our problems. In one sense it is only a matter regarding the meaning of terms as to whether there is any such thing as morality; that is, it is merely a question of fact which any normal consciousness can settle for itself. On the other hand, and in another sense, it is a question involving the meaning, contents, and theory of morality. For that reason it may involve the whole problem, and can be adequately answered only in the sequel of the discussion.

Again, there is so much equivocation and confusion in regard to the nature of ethical conceptions and the theories of them, that general questions can be intelligently discussed only after the fundamental terms have been clearly defined and the various moral phenomena of consciousness analyzed. In fact, nearly all the disputes of Ethics turn upon a misunderstanding of the terms and point of view involved. They are assumed to be simple and uniform in their import, but are in fact extremely complex and variable in their application. For that reason it is exceedingly important to clearly define the various applications of fundamental terms and indicate their relation to the different aspects of the ethical problem. These terms are virtue, vice, good, bad, moral, immoral, right, wrong, duty, obligation, and allied conceptions. We may forestall much useless controversy by first indicating the illusions to which we are liable in using them without being conscious of their equivocal import.

*II. DEFINITION OF TERMS.*—The different schools of Ethics are very much affected by the conceptions they hold of the terms lying at the basis of moral reflection. Their antagonisms also are influenced by the different meanings involved and might be removed by the precautions which analysis and definition may establish. Thus one school makes virtue, as we have seen, the highest good, and so regards it as an ultimate end of conduct; another school does not see how virtue can be an end at all, and conceives it as describing the merit of certain means to an end which it may call pleasure, perfection, or something else. If the terms have more than one meaning there is no necessary conflict between the two modes of thought; otherwise they must disagree. It is the same with other important conceptions, and hence their various denotations must be carefully examined.

*1st. Virtue and Vice.*—These two terms are usually employed as opposites, or contradictory conceptions. More technically they may be treated as contraries. But this refinement aside, they are always opposed to each other. The former, however, often has a meaning which is not reflected in the latter. This is due to the exigencies of special theories, as will appear in the analysis.

The etymological import of the term virtue (Latin: *virtus*) is manliness, and in Roman civilization this was largely represented by the martial type of thought embodying the conceptions of a militant stage of life. But in the course of intellectual development the term was used as the equivalent of the Greek term ἀρετή (*ἄρω*, to fit), whose original import seems to have been fitness, harmony, adjustment, and so apparently describes the adaptation of means to ends. But in Greek Ethics this conception seems not to have been current and the term denoted *excellence*, without distinction between natural and moral, original and acquired, qualities of being. Virtue was thus excellence of any kind, whether of blood, of talents, or of character. But Aristotle's distinction between intellectual and moral virtues and his limitation of ethics to the consideration of the latter have availed to narrow the term's significance until it now properly denotes only moral qualities, *either qualities of will, or qualities of conduct*. There are traces of the old conception in such phrases as "the virtues of medicine," "the virtues of crystals," etc. But this produces no confusion, since the phrases do not occur in ethical speculations. The ambiguity of the term, so far as it affects ethical doctrine, lies in its power to denote both excellence of being or will, and excellence of conduct. The former meaning refers to quality of character, of nature, of personality, and may well be an end of desire or of action. In this sense the merit which it denotes may be an absolute quality, appealing to our approval or admiration, and having its excellence in itself. With this view of it the Stoics and later writers might well consider it as the highest good. But the second meaning which describes excellence of conduct is very different. It here denotes a merit which is purely relative to the end at which the conduct aims. All action is a means to an end, and cannot very well be conceived as an end in itself. Whatever quality it has, therefore, must be derived from the end or consequence to which it leads. If the end be good, the act may be good, and if the end be bad, the act will be bad. Now, as all the specific "virtues" like courage, temperance, honesty, etc., represent actions, there



was no way to look at them but as means to some end, and hence they were virtues because they were causally connected with certain desirable ends like pleasure or perfection. Their quality was relative to those ends and dependent upon them. That is to say, in this meaning of the terms, virtue and virtuous denote only *the fitness of a means to an end* approved on other grounds than the nature of the means. It is evident that in this sense they could not denote an absolute or ultimate end, and hence so conceived we can understand the reluctance of the human mind to speak or think of the particular virtues, such as veracity, honesty, courage, etc., as ends in themselves to be sought on their own account and for which no reason could be assigned. It could not do so as long as it asked and gave the reason for their merit in the end which they were necessary to realize. But when virtue expresses excellence of will, nature, or character the case is different. It is then *the equivalent of perfection*, or the intrinsic quality of a being which is expressed or indicated by particular "virtues," while they are not means for attaining it. In this sense it is an object to be aimed at, not a means for attaining some other object. Hence we find the two very distinct meanings for the term: first, a quality of being which is an *end*, and second, a quality of action which is a *means*. One has absolute and the other has only a relative value.

These two conceptions may give rise to two different theories of morality. If we use the term to denote only the means to an end, virtue must have its character determined solely in relation to that end. It is reducible and capable of analysis into the object which it serves, and will have no value but that of the result to which it is the causal or necessary means. This will explain the natural tendency of the mind to give a reason for the various duties of honesty, veracity, justice, humility, etc., other than those virtues themselves. On the other hand, if we take the term to mean excellence of character, the quality or nature of will which we call good on its own account, or perfection of personality, there is no reason to consider it as a means to an end. Rather it may be regarded as an end having its own

worth, as every highest good or ultimate end, whether it be pleasure or not, must have. Hence it would be reasonable to speak and think of pursuing virtue for its own sake when so conceived.

The term vice requires no special discussion, as its import is parallel with that of virtue; only it is to be noted that general usage confines its application more frequently to the nature of actions, rather than to that of the will or character. Hence it reflects the tendency of the mind to use the two terms for describing the fitness and unfitness of certain actions in an ideal world.

**2d. Good and Bad or Evil.**—These terms also have both an absolute and a relative import: an absolute to denote inherent characteristics, perfections, or imperfections, and a relative to denote fitness or unfitness for achieving an end. We can define both, however, by confining attention to one of them. Good, for instance, will qualify *objects*, animate or inanimate, *persons*, *actions*, and *ends* or *purposes*, and it does not always have the same import in each case. Thus it may qualify objects, animate or inanimate, below man, both absolutely and relatively. For instance, we may say “a good picture,” when we mean only that it comes up to a certain standard of excellence, and not that it is useful for any material purpose. In this sense we mean to describe certain intrinsic perfections of the picture, and not its mere fitness to realize an end. On the other hand, “a good watch,” “a good horse,” “a good government,” “a good machine,” etc., however they may imply the presence of certain excellences, intend definitely to express only their value as means to an end. We should not call them “good” if they did not serve this useful purpose, although their intrinsic qualities might remain the same. The question, then, is whether moral goodness expresses anything more than adaptation to a given purpose. If it does not, we cannot speak of this purpose as “good” at all without degrading it to the rank of a means again to some ultimate end which cannot be called “good.” Mr. Spencer maintains that the term has only a relative import.

"In which cases," he asks, "do we distinguish as good, a knife, a gun, a house? And what trait leads us to speak of a bad umbrella or a bad pair of boots? The characters here predicated by the words good and bad are not intrinsic characters; for apart from human wants, such things have neither merits nor demerits. We call these articles good or bad according as they are well or ill adapted to achieve prescribed ends; . . . so it is when we pass from inanimate objects to inanimate actions." When he comes to ethical actions he uses the same language. "Observation," he says, "shows that we apply them according as the adjustment of acts to ends are, or are not, efficient." All this is very true as far as Mr. Spencer's illustrations go. But he is either unfortunate in the choice of them, or he has failed to make his analysis exhaustive. In most such cases "good" does describe fit adjustment to ends, and only that. But it often also refers to intrinsic perfections which are not considered as a means to an end. They may be determined by relation to an ideal, but this is not making them causally relative to an end. They are qualities of excellence which we may admire without reference to their utility. Such expressions as "a good work of art," "a good book," "a good tree," "a good pane of glass," meaning in each instance only that the object comes up to a certain standard of perfection. Of course, some terms have both the absolute and the relative meaning, but the presence of the relative import may obscure or prevent the detection of the other meaning. A few instances, however, where the expression can denote only certain intrinsic excellences, admired on their own account, are sufficient to set aside Mr. Spencer's limitations and to defend the assertion that there is such a thing as an absolute good, worth or value, not spoken of or conceived as a mere means to an end.

As applied to *persons* this use of the term is quite apparent. "A good man" is an expression which is without any rational meaning unless it describes a certain excellence of character, or quality of will representing at least a certain approximation to an ideal. To conceive it as relative to some end in this case

would be to consider man merely as a means, and not as an end in himself. Where a condition of slavery exists we might use the term in that sense, but in a condition where every man is free and independent, goodness can describe his moral perfection or the presence of a quality which may be viewed as an end, as a worthy object on its own account, and not merely as a means to an end. It is true that man may often be a means to some end: he may always be so. But the moment that he becomes *only* a means, or that his excellences are conceived as *only* a means to some other end, he can have no moral worth which is not recognized in that end. Hence, the human mind when seeking some object or quality of intrinsic value in man, meriting moral approbation, has chosen to call it "good" simply because of that quality and not merely because it might be useful as a means. A good man, meaning a moral man, is one whose nature or character represents something ideal, not merely an instrument for giving pleasure to others or himself. The existence of such a conception is a complete refutation of the limitations placed upon the term by Mr. Spencer, and shows that it possesses other than a purely relative import. The importance of this fact lies in the consideration that it validates the usage of language in speaking of ultimate ends as good, meaning thereby some excellence that is not merely a means, and shows how any means can obtain its merit by virtue of that relation to the end. It is apparent that in these usages the term is quite identical with the two meanings of "virtue," only that "virtue" in its relative sense is the name of a thing which is a means, while "good" distinctly expresses or implies its instrumental character when purely relative.

In its applications to *actions* "good" has only a relative signification. Actions are only means to ends and cannot be called good without limiting that attribute to their instrumental relation or connection with their result, and as Ethics has to do very largely with conduct it is only natural that the term should take on the essential meaning of the relative phenomena which it describes. Courage, fortitude, humility, honesty are all

actions which must be estimated or valued solely on the ground of their relation to the end they serve, or because of the character they express. If they did not represent these relations they would not obtain the right to be called good actions. From these and like illustrations we can only conclude that where actions are described as good or bad, we can view the terms only in their relative signification, to denote merely adjustment to prescribed ends. Hence they describe no merit or obligation which is not derived from the end which they may realize. If this end cannot be shown to be ideal or moral, these actions cannot be good. In Ethics, therefore, good and bad cannot describe any absolute quality in *actions*. An absolute value must be found in some object or purpose whose pursuit sanctifies the action necessary to attain it.

In its application to ends, the term good will have an absolute or a relative import according as the end is *ultimate* or *subordinate*. An ultimate end is one which represents the supreme object of desire or volition, to which everything else is subordinate or contributory. Thus I may make happiness my supreme purpose in life, and in that case I should subordinate fame, wealth, knowledge, and all other accomplishments to it. Or if I choose wealth, I subordinate my manner of business and dealings with men to that one end. On the other hand, a subordinate end is one which is a means to a remoter end. Thus the immediate end of my action may be to make knives. But this end again may be a means to the acquisition of wealth and this again to some other end. Thus some purposes may be both means and ends, and others only ends but not means. An end which is not a means is always ultimate or supreme. Now in application to this the term good can only have an absolute meaning. It can describe the ultimate end or ends of life only as objects having intrinsic worth, and not as means to any remoter end. This must be true or the term cannot apply to them. Thus if the Utilitarian calls pleasure or happiness the highest good, he must either admit the absolute meaning of the term or abandon calling the ultimate end of life a good at all. We cannot define

the term as purely relative and then apply it to an absolute end. Hence when we do apply it to the ultimate object of life we intend to express an intrinsic quality by it, a certain kind of excellence or perfection, and not mere causal capacity.

The importance of considering the two meanings of the term is the same as in the case of the term virtue, with which it is often identical. There is a slight difference between them in most applications, but it is not essential to ethical discussions. The two uses have their value, however, in the fact that they enable us to consider the controversy about moral obligations at its very basis. One of the problems of theoretical interest to Ethics is the question whether moral obligation is ever unconditional; whether duty is not merely relative to an end which we may choose or not, as we please. The sceptic tells us that the various duties and virtues, like temperance, chastity, filial obedience, etc., are binding only so long as we desire the end to which they are the means, and that so long as we reject that ideal there is no necessity or constraint to exercise them. This is to say that moral obligation is conditioned upon something which is not moral or obligatory at all. As long as "good" expresses a merely relative meaning, or fitness to achieve an end, causal or instrumental agency, this might be true. But if the term is also employed to denote what the mind denotes by an absolute and ultimate value, irreducible to anything more supreme, there is reason to consider moral goodness as expressing unconditional obligations of some kind, and we are not at liberty to discard it. It is, in fact, the sense of an unconditionally imperative end that has tempted the human mind to speak and think of the specific virtues as absolutely binding, and thus by abstraction to lose sight of the one fact that constituted their moral character.

**3d. Right and Wrong.**—Right (Latin *rectus*, straight; Greek equivalent, ὀρθός), denotes literally directness or straightness, and wrong (Anglo-Saxon *wringen*, to twist), denotes obliquity or crookedness. In Ethics, however, there is only metaphor to retain these etymological meanings, and hence they describe cer-

tain qualities of action. They do not always coincide with the terms good and bad, or virtue and vice, while they have one associated implication not found in those at all. This will be shown in the analysis of them. The first will suffice for this.

The term "right" has several distinct meanings which may be reduced to its *substantive* and its *attributive* import. They do not all of them express moral quality and it is on this account that the term is liable to illusion. Each may be considered in its order.

1. "Right" (Latin *Jus*) as a *substantive*, "a right" or "rights," denotes a *claim of one person against the infringement of others*, or a possession which can be defended against aggression. It is illustrated in such phrases as "the right to life," "the right to vote," "human rights," etc., and essentially means that force may be legitimately used in the defence of it, though there may not always be an obligation to do so. In this usage it does not necessarily imply any kind of morality. It is practically identical with liberty of action, or a privilege which it is proper to exercise, and which confers immunity upon the subject from all penalties for its exercise. It implies a duty on the part of others to respect it and not to interfere with it, but it does not express any absolute obligation on the part of the subject to act according to his liberty. Consequently it has only a peculiarly relative import in that it implies a duty on the part of other rational beings to restrict their own liberty of action according to this right, but implies no duties on the part of the subject, unless he too be rational. Thus animals are said to have "rights" but no duties; but they have "rights" only in relation to man, who has duties toward them. But between men the duties are reciprocal by virtue of the possession of the same rights, while between animals there are neither "rights" nor duties. It is the possession of a rational nature that determines the existence of duties, and it is a relation to rational beings that determines the existence of "rights." What that relation is it is not necessary to consider at present. But it is important to know that it is only a relation to rational beings and not

merely the possession of a rational nature that determines the existence of rights, as the practice of civilization represents the matter. This will explain why the term in this sense does not connote morality, but only the unreasonableness of interference with a right by those who are rational, or claim to be.

2. "Right" (Latin *rectus*), as an *attributive* qualifying *objects*, denotes correctness of choice or judgment between alternatives, and so is distinguished from wrong as true is from false. It is illustrated in such phrases as "the right person," "the right path," "right judgment," "right opinion," etc. In this usage the term has no moral implications whatever and does not express a moral quality in the object described. It merely indicates that as between two or more alternatives, conceived as related to a certain end, the choice has been a correct one. If I am hesitating about the road I shall take among several before me to a certain point of destination, I may be told that a certain one is "the right road," by which is meant, not that there is any moral obligation to take that course, but that this is the proper one to take me whither I wish to go, or with the least pains and inconvenience. If the road is the only one to my destination and I will to go to it, I am "obliged" to choose this road. But the obligation is not moral unless the journey itself is morally imperative. The obligation is only a constraint or necessity to adopt this means, *if* I insist upon pursuing the end. Hence "right" in this case denotes nothing more than correctness, or the proper causal connection between the alternative or means chosen and the end desired. It simply denotes *intellectually* correct determinations, not moral quality.

3. "Right" (Latin *rectus*, *honestus*, etc.), as *attributive* qualifying *actions*, denotes moral quality, and so indicates their imperativeness or praiseworthiness. There are instances here also where the term signifies merely intellectual correctness of judgment, but it is usually in the phrase "*the* right" as contrasted with "*a* right." This is an interesting illustration of a very subtle illusion to which the human mind is exposed in using such expressions. But phrases like "right conduct," "right action,"



and statements like "that is right," "temperance is right," etc., denote moral quality and hence imply an obligation to realize them. But the term retains its references to causal connection between the means and the end, while it never expresses the conception of virtue taken in the sense of excellence. Even when the term virtue or virtuous refers to actions it never indicates causal capacity or relation, but only moral quality by virtue of that connection with an end conceived as moral. But the term right expresses both moral quality and causal connection when describing the means to an end.

4. "Right" (Latin *equitas, honestum, justitia*, etc.), as *substantive* again, denoting *ends* or an object of moral volition, signifies that which carries the highest obligation with it. It is purely an abstract conception to describe the quality, either of an action or an end that gives it morality and imperativeness. In this meaning of the term the conception of virtue as excellence is not found. There is only the idea of moral necessity or obligation, whether there be excellence, utility, or other merit in it. It denotes in this use pure morality, or the duty that rests upon all wills, absolutely considered and irrespective of any other object than itself. Whether there be any such thing or not, it is not our purpose to settle at present. It is important only to show current usage, and to notice the tendency of the human mind to conceive something else than a purely relative good or right, though it becomes entangled in difficulties, when called to define its meaning, by the simultaneous power of the same terms, to denote only relative qualities.

5. It is proper to call attention to a peculiar use of the term "right," which shows its extreme flexibility. It sometimes denotes merely moral indifference, or *not wrong*. This appears in such expressions as: "It is right to take a walk, or to play ball, if I desire to do so," etc. No moral obligation is expressed by this manner of statement, but only that the act is not wrong provided the liberties of others are not infringed. It is, therefore, more or less synonymous with liberty of action, and seems to be an attributive use of the term to express what is meant by "a

right," or "rights." No special importance attaches to this signification of the word farther, than to denote the equivocation to which it might give rise both consciously and unconsciously.

The term "wrong" has simply the opposite import of the term "right," except a general meaning opposed to that of "a right" or "rights" is not common.

**4th. Moral or Morality.**—The primitive and etymological import of the term (Latin *mos*) was custom, usage, or the rules which society imposed upon its members. The force of public opinion and of the law, with the constraints which they established, gave rise to the notion of authority as characterizing the "moral." Hence the term described a life according to accepted usage, or common as opposed to eccentric and independent conduct. But as civilization progressed, the term took up the fundamental conceptions, which the prevalent theories of Ethics created, regarding the nature of what was called morality. The implication of external authority was transformed into one of internal authority, and then into the conceptions of utilitarian and other doctrines. Very early these conceptions now expressed by it were embodied in equivalents, like righteousness, uprightness, holiness, etc. (Latin *honestum*, *rectum*, Greek τὸ καλόν, δίκαιή, and later ὀρθία), and when the term came to be adopted for the general class of ethical phenomena, it denoted a certain quality about actions which made them praiseworthy and imperative, independently of mere conformity to usage or authority out of the fear of consequences. Controversies also between the physical and the "moral" sciences availed to impress their influence upon the meaning of the term, and hence taking all of them into account, we should be able to enumerate a number of significations. But they can be reduced to two general forms, the *generic* and the *specific* meanings of the term.

1. The generic import of the term moral applies to all *voluntary* actions, whether good or bad, and which are the subject of ethical consideration. Such actions are called "moral" in contradistinction to *physical* and *involuntary* actions, which are not subject to either praise or blame, and so are

properly *non-moral* in their nature. The distinction here is between personal or free and impersonal or necessitated acts. There is no special importance attaching to this meaning, but it is well to keep it in mind as necessary to understand certain distinctions which have been embodied in ethical doctrine. It is within the limits of the second meaning that the term obtains its more important qualifications.

2. The specific import of the term is that of rightness as opposed to wrong and hence is contrasted with the *immoral* rather than the unmoral or non-moral, though it is, of course, distinguished from these at the same time. Moral is here not only *personal* but is also *virtuous* and imperative actions, and so describes that quality of conduct by which it has acquired the character of righteousness. Within this general meaning it has also obtained different meanings according as action is viewed externally or objectively and internally or subjectively. Sometimes it denotes any personal act affecting the order of the world for good, no matter what the motive, and sometimes it describes only the volitional act independently of the consequences, and so makes righteousness merely a quality of will. But these meanings will come up when discussing the questions of moral actions more directly, while it is sufficient at present to know that there is an equivocal meaning in the term growing out of this distinction between motive and consequence. As a general result, then, we obtain two important uses of the term, one contrasting personal or voluntary and physical actions, and the other two distinct kinds of personal or voluntary actions. The first pair represents the contrast between conscious and unconscious, or free and necessitated actions; the second pair represents the antithesis between good and evil actions, both of which are free or personal and conscious. This gives us three forms of actions to be considered—the moral, the non-moral or indifferent, and the immoral. Confusion may occur between the last two classes when we assume that all actions must be either good or bad; that is, we sometimes illegitimately identify “not moral” with immoral. This probably gives rise to no difficulties

in speculative and theoretical Ethics when we are on the alert for such illusions, but in practical life it often avails to carry unfair insinuations with it when we speak of an action as "not moral" and mean by it that it is immoral. Common life often proceeds upon the loose assumption that the disjunction is complete between the moral and the immoral, and distributes praise accordingly, and thus does not make allowance for the large field of actions that are indifferent and that constitute the province of rights and of moral liberty.

**5th. Duty and Obligation.**—Duty (Latin *debere*, to owe) and obligation (Latin *obligare*, to bind), though etymologically distinct, have logically the same import. Both originally expressed that relation between two persons which is indicated by the indebtedness of one to the other, a condition in which there is a constraint upon one to return a service to the other. They still express this thought with the conception that the service is not a mere debt or obligation, assumable or dissolvable at will by contract, but a fixed due unconditionally binding upon a rational subject toward all others. They describe what *ought* to be done as contrasted with that which we are at liberty to do or not do. The ideas expressed by them are very difficult to define in other terms than themselves. They are rather unique in their nature, and we better understand the feelings and conditions they indicate than we can choose any brief phrase to denominate their meaning. Besides, like most other terms in Ethics, they have absorbed the variety of conceptions that have characterized different stages of intellectual and moral development, while they have lost none of the associations belonging to an earlier stage. Hence they have become ambiguous. Constraint, a feeling of necessity or compulsion, a limitation to one course of conduct where we desire liberty, are the conceptions that describe the original and perhaps the prevalent notion of the terms. But the development of the doctrine that morality does not consist merely in obedience to authority out of fear, but in reverence for law and personality, has carried with it the notion that our duty and obligation consists in reverence and re-

spect for an ideal which is very far removed from the notion or constraint or compulsion. The consequence is that the two terms give considerable difficulty in the construction of an ethical theory. One of their meanings opposes them to inclination, desire, or interest, and the other identifies them with interest, or at least with the highest conceivable interest. This variation was brought about by the process alluded to in which the terms retained along with their older associations the accretions of later stages of moral development. In the first place, the constraint of authority and the subordination of all other claims and desires to the one course of conduct enjoined by what was called a man's duty very easily carried with it, especially in individualistic ages, the conception that all desires and inclinations must be suppressed in the presence of this law. This created the idea that duty necessarily involves a struggle or conflict with interest and natural desire, and so tenacious has been this impression of its meaning that most persons still think of it as always requiring a sacrifice of natural impulses to do their duty, and many often think and act with the fear that they are not doing what is right unless they are resisting the temptations of some pleasure or desire. But as the sense of duty in this conception represented the highest motive to action, the intellectual change from the sentiment of authority and fear to that of reverence or respect as the proper attitude of mind and will in moral action, while the object of it remained the same as before, carried with it the conception that one's duty must consist with reverence and a positive love for the ideal; so that the term added this idea to that of conflict with lower impulses, while it changed the kind or attitude of the subject's interest, and there remains still the difficulties of conceiving the term as implying a conflict with desire, on the one hand, and as representing the highest desire, on the other.

Theoretical Ethics is very much influenced by this equivocation, and even the general moral consciousness is confused by it when called to assign the highest motives to conduct. But the consequences of this ambiguity cannot be dwelt upon at present.

It is enough to know it exists and is likely to produce all the perverse antagonisms which duplicity of meaning is calculated to create. Later, in the discussion of the nature of morality, we may return to it, and be content at present with the warning against illusion, which the consciousness of equivocal conceptions can provide.

*III. PSYCHOLOGICAL FIELD OF MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS.*—Man's moral nature has often been conceived as a simple one and very little complicated with the intellectual. Many, indeed, have gone so far as to assert that the only difference between man and the animals, so far as intelligence is concerned, is one of degree, but that man's moral nature established a difference of kind. This conception of the matter makes moral capacity unique and independent in its character of the general faculties of intelligence, and has been embodied in the doctrine of conscience. But it is a mistake thus to isolate moral phenomena. They are part and parcel of the general functions of the mind. Not that they cannot be distinguished from other mental events, but that the distinction is rather one of the *objects* than of the *processes* concerned. Moral phenomena will give more prominence to certain functions than the purely intellectual activities in the objective sciences of nature, but they will not exclude them altogether. Consciousness, judgment, feeling, are quite as much concerned with morality as they are with science and art; only the objects of it differ and perhaps the kind of feeling. But they cannot be eliminated from it altogether. They pervade all the operations of our moral nature and give it completeness. Hence, in order to properly understand that nature, we require to know all the elements that enter into it. But we can abbreviate the analysis for Ethics which would have to be more elaborate in Psychology. Hence, we shall merely outline the whole field of mental phenomena. A sketch of this kind is represented by the following tabular review.

- I. *Intellection.*—This is the general process occupied with the acquisition, retention, reproduction, and elaboration of conceptions. It includes three subordinate processes.

1st. Cognition = Consciousness of *present* objects.

1. Sensation = Affection or Reaction of the organism.
2. Perception = Apprehension of an object.

2d. Conservation = Preservation and Consciousness of *past* objects.

1. Retention = Passive Memory.
2. Reproduction and Association = Recall.
3. Recognition = Active Memory.

3d. Construction = Consciousness of *relations*. The process is one of comparison and synthesis.

1. Conception = Synthesis of *percepts*.
2. Judgment = Synthesis of *concepts*.
3. Reasoning = Synthesis of *judgments*.

II. Emotion.—This is a general state of excitement attending the exercise of function, or interesting the subject as an attraction or repulsion.

1st. Subjective, or *Reflexive* Emotion = *Sensibilities* or Pleasures and Pains. These are reflexes of activity, functional, intellectual, and volitional.

2d. Objective, or *Impulsive* Emotion = *Passions*. These are the attractions and repulsions of consciousness directed toward objects.

III. Conation.—This is the general faculty of effort or all the influences of the mind which issue in activity.

1st. Motive Powers = *Desires* and *Legislative* functions of consciousness.

1. Impulse = Non-deliberative and Unadjusted Passion.
2. Instinct = Organic, Co-ordinated, and Adjusted Desires.
3. Reason = Deliberative and Regulative Forces of Consciousness.
  - (a) Prudential Reason ; *Utility* or *Interest* is its object.
  - (b) Moral Reason, or Conscience ; *Duty* or *Virtue* is its object.

2d. Active Powers = Determinative and Initiative Functions of Consciousness.

1. Choice = Determinative. Internal in its nature and decides the character of the agent, or the *subjective* quality of moral action.
2. Volition = Executive. External in its effect and decides, though it does not constitute, the *objective* quality of moral action.

In distinguishing man's moral from his intellectual nature we do not wholly exclude the latter functions, but we merely add them to those which we regard as more particularly constituting the moral, and these are the emotional and conative functions. Intellectual operations, occupied with the acquisition of mere knowledge, concern themselves with *facts*, events or phenomena as they occur according to natural law. They simply observe and explain them. Thus intellectual processes are speculative, reducing phenomena to their laws and causes. On the other hand, man's moral functions are concerned with *ideals* or *ends*, as opposed to mere events. They estimate the *value* or *worth* of certain facts and objects of desire, and attempt to regulate the pursuit of them as ends. This contrasts them with the intellectual processes as occupied with an order of events already produced, and shows them concerned with a possible order of events not yet realized, and which must be realized by the will. But in spite of this difference intellectual activities are involved in the moral. Consciousness is always involved in the judgments of value and the motivation of volition. Cognition is an invariable element of the estimation of values and ends, and the speculative functions are necessary to the determination of the means to ends. And "*means*" is only a term to denote the practical, as "*cause*" is a term to denote the theoretical, relation of events. Moral consciousness determines the ends of life and the *legitimate* means to them, while purely intellectual consciousness determines the causal relations of phenomena, which indicate what *can* be the means to ends. The former is helpless, however, without the accompaniment of the latter, and hence cognition must always be a fundamental element of moral consciousness.

It is not necessary to enter into the detailed relation of the subordinate faculties to the moral. It is enough to know that they enter into the subject matter and processes of moral phenomena as general elements wherever cognition is a part. It is only necessary to emphasize the function of the knowing process in order to set aside the doctrine that moral consciousness is



simple and unique. The temptation to regard it as such comes from the prominence of the feelings, expressed by pleasure and pain and the sense of duty, in moral consciousness as a whole, which do not appear as distinctive in theoretical occupations. But the necessity of knowing the highest good, of discriminating between objects that compete with it for this supremacy, of ascertaining what are the possible means to any end, as well as the right means, is evidence of what pure cognition does for conscience, and hence it must be recognized as a psychological datum in the complex known as moral consciousness.

It is apparent, therefore, that we use the terms "moral consciousness" as an expression for the *ensemble* or aggregate of all the intellectual, emotional, motive and active functions of the mind as exercised with objects called moral. In that sense we may regard it as unique. But it is so by virtue of the object with which it is occupied rather than because of the mental processes involved, which are the same as in other mental activities. Thus moral judgment is simply discrimination in regard to right and wrong; moral emotion is approval or disapproval, while intellectual emotion is satisfaction or dissatisfaction in the discovery of truth; moral choice is a decision between right and wrong, while in scientific matters it is attention or correct selection of facts. In this way we readily perceive that moral consciousness is not only complex, but differs from any other consciousness only in the subject matter with which it deals.

Again the Sensibilities and the Passions are prominent elements of the moral nature. For instance, pleasure and pain are accompaniments of nearly every form of action, functional or volitional, and we are obliged to take account of them in regulating our conduct. They may become the sole object of volition, the one of pursuit and the other of aversion, and lead to the disregarding of other ends. Again the passions of love, hatred, sympathy, fear, anger, malice are influences on character, or expressions of it and require to be properly directed. They are moral agencies in so far as they are rationally controlled and directed and hence make up a part of the moral nature of

the subject. The study of them and of the means of keeping both the sensibilities and the passions under subjection is a very important part of Ethics.

The conative functions are a still more important element of moral consciousness. All moral action, so far as it is rational, and it is perhaps impossible to conceive any other as moral, must have its motives and its executive character. The motive is the consciousness of a purpose or end and the accompaniment of a desire to act. It is the impelling character of consciousness. It may take any one of the three forms mentioned—impulse, instinct, or reason. All these go to make up the agent considered as a moral being and so are a part of the psychology of conduct. Then there is the choice and the volition. The choice is the decision of the mind between two or more alternatives, and it is the point where the whole character of the agent is determined. It is the first element of action properly considered, and as it is, so is the morality of the man. The volition is the determinate act to execute a choice or resolve and puts into effect the object chosen. It is the part of a moral act which sets other agencies going to achieve a result, and determines the good or bad part of conduct apart from the character of the agent. The motive and choice determine the goodness or badness of the will, and the volition the goodness or badness both of the character and of the result, of the former as an expression of it, and of the latter as the cause of it. The psychology of morality, therefore, involves all these complex functions as determining its nature. It is not a unique and isolated phenomenon, but absorbs in various proportions all the operations and functions of the mind.

Having thus indicated all the elements that enter into our moral nature, we may speak of them comprehensively as knowledge, emotion, and volition. This conception of the case will enable us to take up moral action and discuss its nature. Moral action covers a narrower field than the moral nature. It refers mainly to the will, though regarding the other factors as important accompaniments. But in taking up the simple phenomenon of action we can discuss it as an event in contrast

with actions that are admittedly not moral. The first problem, therefore, will be to decide the conditions of morality, or of the distribution of praise and blame.

**IV. THE CONDITIONS OF MORALITY.**—When we come to classify actions connected with human life, we find many of them free from either praise or blame, and yet their nature and effects make them resemble those which are moral to such an extent as often to cause confusion regarding them. Every moral act is subject to praise or blame, merit or demerit, using the term moral here in its specific sense. It is in this way contrasted with all actions which occur without the intention or consciousness of the agent, and all that are not freely performed. Hence, the following conditions of morality :

**1st. Consciousness or Intelligence.**—Every act, in order to be moral, must at least be an intelligent act. The agent must be conscious of what he is doing. He must have an end in view, and if not conscious of all the effects that may follow, he must at least know that he aims at some result. It is for what he aims at that he is responsible, and he cannot be responsible for any result of which he is wholly ignorant, and which it is no part of his intention to effect. That is, he is not morally responsible, as that term is technically applied, unless conscious. We may interfere with him to prevent such an action, on the ground that he is the cause of it, but he is not responsible or subject to praise or blame unless the act be conscious or intentional.

There is a whole series of actions that cannot be moral for the want of this characteristic. First among them are *physical* actions which are the necessary effects of antecedent causes. Then there is the class of *reflex* actions which are so much like purely mechanical movements that they might be called such. They are unconscious and physiological responses to stimulus, and are illustrated in their purest forms by such cases as circulation, digestion, and in modified forms by breathing, winking, etc. Actions also which represent an immediate and unreflective response to some stimulus, though we become at once conscious of them when done, are true reflexes. Again, *automatic* or *spontaneous*

actions, like those of very young infants, or the unregulated and unconscious or unintended acts of any one, not affected by any known stimulus, are also like the reflexes in being non-moral. They are physical or physiological to all intents and purposes. That they are not moral actions is a truism which every one knows. But they afford a clear illustration of what must be one of the essential conditions of a moral act. They lack the element of consciousness. The agent is neither conscious of the result which they effect, nor does he consciously aim at this result. But where he is conscious of the result, and intends it, he is responsible. That is to say, that to be conscious, on the one hand, of the effect of one's action, and to consciously aim at it, on the other, are facts which place such actions under a very different category from those which have just been mentioned. Consciousness, either aiming at an end, or aware of a result connected with volition, characterizes conduct as very different from mechanical actions, and the clearest way to present its influence in this respect is to compare it with that class. Consciousness is presumably a cause or antecedent of action conditioning or accompanying, or at least the index, of the power to determine conduct otherwise than mechanical or unconscious forces. It involves a knowledge of alternative courses of action, and even when this is not determinately active, it represents an influence which is directed to an end as distinguished from a mere result, and in this way qualifies actions so that they cannot be identified with physical movements and their antecedents. It is this intelligence which makes conduct rational, as it is called, under the condition described, and any action which does not come under some degree of this characteristic must be excluded from morality, generically considered, and treated as non-moral.

**2d. Freedom.**—But there is a second equally important condition of morality closely connected with the first. It is freedom. It is not enough that conduct be accompanied by consciousness; it must be free. The subject must be the cause of the action and capable at least of knowing that some other alternative was possible than the one actually chosen. We

cannot at present discuss either what is meant by the freedom of the will or the question whether it is free or not. We can only point out that in some sense there must be what is called free will if morality be possible at all. We are not here assuming that there is any such thing in fact as morality, but only that morality and freedom must stand or fall together; that freedom is a primary condition of it, if morality exists in fact. The term is unquestionably used in different senses, which we shall have to examine again, but there is one general conception of it that all would admit, and this is that a free act is, in the first place, initiated by the subject, not by the object or external world, and, in the second place, is consciously willed with a knowledge of alternative possibilities (whether the agent can choose between them or not). In this sense, at least, every act must be free in order to be moral. All such actions of my person as are reflex, automatic, or performed unconsciously are not free; that is, *I* have not caused them. So with any actions forced upon me, and of which I am the mere instrument. Properly speaking, they are not *my* acts: they are only connected with my physical person. Thus if some other being or person uses my hand or limbs to effect any result, if I am the passive instrument for inflicting an injury upon some one, as, for instance, being pushed against another, my action is not free. Strictly speaking it is not my act at all, though its connection with my person gives rise to the habit of calling it mine. But it is not a free act, not being willed or initiated by myself, and I cannot be made responsible for it. Neither praise nor blame can attach to it, and hence it is not moral in any sense of the term. To be such I must will the action. I must be the free, spontaneous cause of it. In this way we must regard freedom as a fundamental condition of morality.

**3d. Conscience.**—Conscience, speaking generally, is the power to distinguish between right and wrong, whatever we may say about its additional functions. This faculty or power must be possessed by every free agent in order to be moral or to make his conduct moral. It is not enough that he be free and

intelligent or conscious. He must also be able to appreciate the existence of a moral ideal and to distinguish between right and wrong. It is probable that all the higher animals act both consciously with reference to an end and with a measurable degree of deliberation and freedom, but they lack all traces of what we call conscience, even when they do noble acts, some of which are recorded of them. It is usual to explain such actions by reference to instinct, association, sympathy for masters, but not by reference to a conscience as we know it in man. I do not mean by this to affirm the broad distinction between man and the animals which was current before evolution was accepted, but only to indicate that the difference is great enough to be embodied in the doctrine of conscience; for nothing can be more certain, whatever the resemblances, than that man has a nature in relation to conduct which animals do not systematically betray, and no one adjudges the animal world as moral or responsible. Animals are either almost wholly egoistic in their character or they act without the slightest sense of duty or respect for law, so far as can be determined. Hence despite their consciousness and freedom they have not the remaining quality to make their actions moral, subject to praise and blame or moral discipline. This contrast helps distinctly to show how conscience, which distinguishes man, must be a condition of morality and responsibility; for wherever the person or creature is suspected of being without it, his conduct is classed as morally indifferent. It cannot possess that quality of reason and will which acknowledges consciously a distinction between right and wrong. I am not saying or implying that conscience must be active in all applied cases, but only that the individual must have the capacity for the distinction mentioned before his action can be treated as moral. The relation of an active conscience to conduct will come up again. But to distinguish between moral and non-moral conduct the agent must have the sense of value and obligation in social relations to at least a limited degree; that is, he must have the *quality* of power expressed by conscience, though he may not have the *quantity* of development of it represented by perfect

responsibility. This, then, is a primary condition of treating his actions as moral in any sense whatever.

There are certain interesting facts to be noted about these conditions. They are cumulative in their nature. Besides being conditions of morality they are related to each other somewhat in the same way. The first conditions the second, and the second along with the first conditions the third. The presence of all of them at the same time is necessary to make conduct moral, but the absence of any one is sufficient to eliminate that quality. But the absence of the first will render the existence of both freedom and conscience impossible, while it may be present and both of these absent. This merely shows that freedom and conscience are qualities added on to consciousness.

Another circumstance to be observed is that these qualities condition morality in the *generic* sense. The possession of them does not make an act moral in the specific sense, as contrasted with immoral. They merely make it accountable, or moral in the sense that the agent can be treated according to the law of imputability which assumes that he is more or less capable of alternative choice. A man may be conscious or intelligent, he may be free, and he may have a conscience, and yet his conduct be immoral. This shows that they are not elements but conditions of morality. One other condition is necessary to make conduct moral in the specific sense. It is *conscientiousness*, or respect for the end chosen, as the right, or as the highest good. I shall not enlarge upon this feature of the problem, because it will come up again. But it is important to remark, before going farther, a circumstance incident to the ambiguity of the term "moral" as it has already been defined, and calling attention to the important distinction between the conditions and the elements of morality; which, however, is occasioned mainly, if not altogether, by that equivocation. We may turn next, therefore, to the elements of moral conduct as suggested by the distinction to which we have alluded.

V.—*ELEMENTS OF MORAL CONDUCT*.—This topic can be discussed without reference to the distinction between generically

and specifically moral actions, for in the broad sense they have the same *formal* elements. They differ only *materially*; that is, in the character of the elements of which they are composed. Every moral act is complex, by virtue of the fact that it exists in relation to the subject and the object, or the agent and the patient, the person acting and the person or thing acted upon. The word "action" might not indicate this fact of complexity, because it is taken in its abstract sense to denote merely the volition or the movements taken as instruments connecting the subject with some designed result. But taken in its complex applications moral action necessarily includes more than mere choice alone or mere movement alone. It involves both the state of mind and will which is the antecedent of movement and volition, and the consequence which is the effect or object of that antecedent. In its comprehensive import, therefore, moral conduct comprises three elements, the *motive*, the *act*, and the *result*. Calderwood makes them the motive, the act, and the end. But the motive and the end are inseparable and imply each other, so that the distinction intended to be conveyed by them is not sufficiently clear. Hence I choose the term result or consequence as indicating something which does not necessarily imply the motive. This distinction between the end and the result is an important one, because it has a bearing upon the comprehensiveness of morality. The end is a principal factor in determining what is moral. It is always *the result aimed at*, and when there is no miscarriage of purpose the motive and result will always coincide. But there are often results in connection with volition which were not intended by the agent, and which yet determine the character of the conduct without involving the morality and responsibility of the agent. Hence it is necessary to distinguish a certain function for results in the problem of Ethics apart from that of the motive and end. Whether we shall call the result any part of morality, considering that it may not be intended, depends wholly upon the conception we take of morality. There are two separate schools in regard to this matter. One of them estimates morality wholly from the



standpoint of consequences and the other wholly from the standpoint of motives. This difference makes it necessary to examine each element very carefully in order to ascertain the part played by it in the constitution of morality. But previous to this undertaking it is important to state the reasons for so considering the several elements of conduct.

**1st. Reasons for the Analysis of Morality.**—There are several reasons for separating morality into distinct elements. Were there no difference between the schools in regard to it, and were the ground of it either the motive or the consequences alone, there would be no complexity to deal with. But the very fact that one school lays the whole stress upon character, and the other upon consequences, shows that the conception of morality and responsibility is distinct in each case. Common sense generally exhibits judgments in sympathy with both schools, either without knowing, or with entire indifference to, the contradiction which is often charged to it. Hence we have the following reasons for investigating separately the motive, the act, and the result in conduct.

**1. THE SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE MEANINGS OF MORALITY.**—We have already discussed one ambiguity incident to the use of the term "moral," namely, its generic and its specific import. But there is a still more important difficulty and this grows out of the habit, now of using it to denote the subjective conditions of conduct, and again to denote its objective reference, or the ground upon which the subjective facts and conduct are adjudged. This originates in the following manner: On the one hand, all conduct must be measured by reference to its *'end'*. But this is a consequence; only it is the consequence aimed at, and this partial coincidence of the motive and result often gives rise to their confusion with each other. Again, consequences are good or bad according as they are related to human perfection and happiness, and reflect their character upon the actions issuing in them. This quality may not be moral goodness or badness, but only a characteristic which is related to human welfare for good or evil without reference to the motive

producing the consequence. As good and bad are applied to the same acts when originating from volition, it is only natural that morality and the good should become confused with each other, and the former measured solely by reference to consequences.

On the other side, as remarked, ends and consequences or results do not always coincide. Consequences of which the agent may be wholly ignorant, and at which he did not aim, may be produced by his conduct. For these he cannot be held responsible, and as morality and responsibility are often made coextensive in their import, it would be natural to exclude consequences *per se* from the strict consideration of morality, and to limit that quality to the motive or end. Physical results not aimed at or not known may occur incidentally, and be good or bad, but consciousness, being a condition of what is moral, and presumably absent in this imaginary case, while morality is supposably initiated by volition, the conception of that characteristic is naturally confined to the intelligent cause or motive of the result, rather than to the result itself. Hence one school measures morality by the antecedent or cause of results aimed at, excluding consequences, as equally irrelevant with purely physical phenomena, while the opposing school measures it by consequences and confuses the *subjectively* moral or immoral with the *objectively* good or bad.

2. THE AMBIGUITY OF THE TERM ACT.—There is an equivocation in the use of this term which almost coincides with the subjective and objective reference of the term moral. Sometimes it is used to denote the external and physical action necessary to effect the result or end which the agent has in view, and again it sometimes denotes the internal act of choice and volition. We condemn fraudulent voting, or bribery, for instance, no matter what the motive may be. We do so because of the unfairness and injustice done by it, and in this way seem to regard only the consequence as the measure of wrong. The "action" in such a case is either the whole complex act of the agent combined with the physical movements necessary to

achieve the result, or it is the latter of the two alone. On the other hand, if a man attempts bribery or fraudulent voting, but fails in it, we equally condemn the "act," though no bad results are effected. We take into account the intention or motive. Similarly we condemn the desire to do an injury or the feeling of malice, and approve humane sympathies. In such cases the "act" is nothing but the subjective intention or expression of character. Hence, in the one instance, action denotes either the whole complex phenomenon of choice, volition, and the external movement, or merely this external physical act. In the other it denotes only the motive and choice. Here again we have the distinction between subjective and objective morality, a distinction which is rendered necessary by the frequent miscarriage of purposes.

3. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CRITERION OF RESPONSIBILITY AND THAT OF MORALITY.—The standard of responsibility consists of intelligence, freedom, and conscience, and hence is purely subjective. The element which usually receives the most emphasis is freedom, and hence responsibility is viewed from the position of the *cause* of action, and not from that of the *effect* or consequence. No man is held responsible for the consequences of his conduct unless several conditions are fulfilled: (a) that he intends them; (b) that he knows they are connected with his conduct, though they are not the object of it; (c) that he is not culpable for his ignorance. Hence supposing that the consequence is wholly outside the agent's knowledge and intention, he is not responsible. In this conception of the case if morality were limited to motives, as in one school, it would coincide with responsibility. But on the other side, a man's conduct is good or bad externally by virtue of its relation to consequences and without regard to motives. Even the character of motives is measured by the result aimed at, and not by their qualities *per se*, unless we identify them with excellence or perfection of being; which, however, can be done only by a stretch of moral judgment. But so far from measuring the worth of conduct externally considered by the cause of it we estimate it solely by reference to the end,

or the consequence to which it is a means. Consequently, as morality and responsibility are sometimes identified, or made to coincide with each other, and at other times are distinguished by the difference between their criterion, we are obliged to take account of different functions in the separate elements of moral conduct and character taken as a whole. We may then summarize the relations of these elements to each other and to the whole complex of which they are a part.

**2d. Nature and Relations of the Elements.**—Each element has its own place and characteristic, and exhibits very complex relations. Some are subjective or internal, and some are objective or external, and again they may have both references at the same time as the summary will indicate.

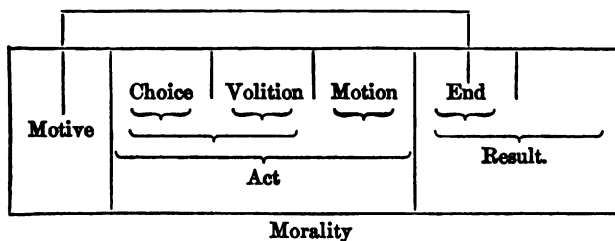
1. **MOTIVES.**—These are subjective in their nature, but *may* be objective in their reference. That is, they are states of mind, but are directed, or may be directed, only to some result outside of the mind. The judgment of them as moral or immoral must depend either upon their relation to this result or upon them as qualities of the subject, as excellences or as defects of nature to be desired or deplored on their own account.

2. **THE ACT.**—The act may be regarded from two points of view; that is, it may have two elements, each having its own characteristic: (a) There is the *subjective* element or act. This is the choice and volition. They reflect the moral nature or character of the *agent*, and may be estimated without regard to the consequences, but not without regard to the end. (b) There is also the *objective* element. This is the physical movement or effect set into action by the volition, and it reflects the moral nature or character of the result. It will be good or bad according to consequences and without regard to intentions.

3. **RESULT, OR CONSEQUENCE.**—This is purely *objective* in its nature, unless we choose to regard a state of the subject like pleasure or feeling as the result, which we may in many cases. But even then it is objective in the sense that it cannot be directly willed, and it is quite as often some effect foreign to the consciousness of the agent. Considering it as independent of the

end it will be purely external to the mind as objective, and will not even have a subjective reference. Its character, unless regarded as a means to a remoter end, will be found wholly in itself. Its goodness or badness will express its intrinsic qualities.

4. THE END.—I mention this as incidentally a kind of fourth element. It partly coincides with results as already indicated. It is the result aimed at, but is nothing more, and hence cannot denote all the consequences that may be unintentionally connected with conduct. It is, therefore, *objective* in its nature, though *subjective* in its reference. A motive we have seen is subjective in nature but objective in its reference; the end is the reverse of this, and partakes of a like double nature. It will be seen in this conception of it that it coincides partly with *motives* and partly with *results*. It is, therefore, the point where subjective and objective morality coincide, though a perfect and ideal world would also include all the consequences that are desirable and exclude the undesirable. All these relations may now be represented by the following diagram and their character determined according to one's preferences. Each rectangle will represent the whole area of a single element, and all combined the total of the references expressed by the idea of morality, as conceived by both schools.



The diagram represents both the chronological order and connection of the several elements, and the reference of the motive to the end, which is a logical connection. The act may be any one of the three elements, choice, volition, or physical motion, or all of them combined. The result may or may not include the

end. In one school, morality, or the character of conduct, may be measured by nothing except what comes within the free and intentional effect, and in the other school it may appear worthy or reprehensible according to results independently of the will, though the agent may be excused from responsibility.

Thus far we have done nothing but analyze the conception of morality, stating their relations to each other and to the whole. But there is more to be done still. We have assumed that the nature and meaning of the term "motive" was clear and intelligible. But this is far from being true. We require to define it carefully and to investigate its forms as usually represented and thus to determine more carefully the relations of this and other elements to the total product known as moral conduct. This must be done under the title of the *functions* of the elements in morality.

#### VI. FUNCTIONS OF THE ELEMENTS OF MORALITY.—

There is something more to be determined here than their chronological order and logical relations. These are intimately connected with their functions, but they do not constitute them. The functions of the elements are what they effect, or what they contribute in quality to the complex whole which is the subject of moral judgment, and this will be found in some cases to consist of more than one characteristic. Let us examine the functions of each element more carefully.

**1st. The Motive.**—The function of the motive in morality will depend wholly upon the conception we take of it. Unfortunately it is not a simple conception, as the diagram above seems to imply, unless we decide to limit its import as some moralists do. But traditional and current views often make it a compound of ideas and feelings or impulses, each with very different functions in the problem. Hence we must define and analyze it very carefully.

**1. DEFINITION OF MOTIVES.**—A motive is an *idea of an end to be realized plus the desire for it*. In this conception we propose to represent two elements as necessary to the nature of a motive in the proper sense of the term, a *cognitive* and an

*impulsive* or *dynamic* element. Sometimes the term is taken to denote only the idea of an end to be attained, and sometimes it is applied to the feeling which is supposed to be the propelling force of consciousness. The former emphasizes the place and functions of reason, and the latter the function of emotion in the conception of it. Often it is the rational element that is supposed to determine the moral nature of the motive and at other times the emotional or desiderative element is regarded as the moral factor. Thus, wherever reason or rational consciousness, as in Plato, the Stoics, the Scholastics, Kant, Butler, and others, has been put forward as the principal condition of morality this element of the motive seems to have been regarded as the most important; nay, as the only one which could make conduct moral. On the other hand, wherever emotions, feelings, or desires, as opposed to mere ideas, as in the Epicureans, the utilitarians, the æsthetic school, including Hutcheson, Hume, Adam Smith, and others, have been regarded as determining the moral nature, the dynamic side of consciousness has appeared to be the most important. This is reflected in the various impulses and instincts, or forms of desire, which are discussed in connection with moral problems and regarded as impelling forces acting on the will. Thus the passions and desires like anger, hatred, love, hunger, thirst, lust, ambition, etc., are always spoken of as "motives" to volition, even when they are described as blind, unreflective, or irrational incentives. The agent is supposed to be moral or immoral according as he is governed by the better or the worse of these passions.

But I cannot agree to call either element taken alone as a "motive," in the true moral sense. Loosely speaking, we may consider every necessary antecedent to volition a "motive," whether it be ideational or emotional. Conduct under such an antecedent cannot be moral in any sense of the term, for the reason that if the "motive" be an idea only, it has no directing power, and if it be a passion only, it has no rationality. There may be much instinctive action under the law of dynamogenesis, which is that consciousness, from the very nature of its emotional

concomitant and coloring, tends to issue in some form of activity. But the want of direction to a deliberately chosen end in such cases prevents such action from being rational and moral as we understand it, whatever we may choose to call it. It may have all the desired results of a moral act, but it depends so much upon the right conditions for producing the particular consciousness necessary to effecting the result, and lacks so completely that reflective character expressed by the knowledge of what the agent is doing, that it cannot be more than objectively moral, while it may be subjectively either bad or indifferent. I prefer, therefore, to maintain that a true "motive," as the subject of Ethics must contain both a cognitive and a dynamic element, or an idea and a desire, and that it will be defective in moral character precisely in proportion to the absence of one or the other of these elements. If consciousness predominates in the ideational element, there will be little or no activity, and there can be no morality until the will is affected. On the other hand, if desire predominates, and reflective tendencies are suppressed by blind passion, action will not be moral for the lack of rational control. Morality is thus the rational direction of consciousness, and the motive, therefore, contains both an ideal and a desiderative or dynamic element. This explains why a motive is both a *final* and an *efficient* cause of conduct, and though it creates certain difficulties in discussing the freedom of the will, to recognize the dynamic characteristic, the complex nature of it is necessary to render intelligible both the general conceptions of morality, and the scientific theories of it.

Before proceeding farther, it may be important to examine the distinction sometimes made between the "motive" and the "intention" of an act. Bentham, for instance, defined a motive as that for which an act was done, and an intention as both that for which and that in spite of which an act was done. This view makes intention more comprehensive than motive, and includes it. Others have followed Bentham in the distinction.\* It has

\* Muirhead, *Elements of Ethics*, p. 58. Mackenzie, *Manual of Ethics*, p. 39.



some importance for the extent of responsibility in conduct, and deserves notice. Mr. Muirhead states it very clearly and briefly. "Intention," he says, "is wider than motive. The former may be said to include the latter, but not *vice versa*. For while the end or consequent for the sake of which the action is done is, of course, intended, it is only part of the intention, and is sometimes distinguished from the other part as the 'ultimate intention.' On the other hand, the consequences of the intermediate steps as the means adopted, though part of the intention, are not part of the motive. Thus, the father who punishes his child is said to intend the child's good. The good of the child is the motive. But he also intends to cause the child pain; the pain, however, though it is part of the intention, cannot in any sense be called the motive or reason why he punished him. Or take the case of the man who sells his coat to buy a loaf of bread. His motive is to buy the bread. It is also part of his intention to do so. It is part of his intention also to part with his coat, but this cannot in any intelligible sense be the motive of his conduct." Thus the motive is the ultimate end sought, while the intention is this end plus either the means or a necessary concomitant of it, of which we are conscious. Responsibility will, therefore, cover all of which we are conscious in the act, no matter whether it is a part of the motive or not.

2. CLASSIFICATION OF MOTIVES.—The function of motives in determining morality will depend as much upon their kinds as upon their nature in general. Morality is often a thing of degrees, and is not a simple, absolute, or uniform type of action. It is now more and now less pure or perfect. This is determined by the various kinds of influences affecting conduct. These influences differ in their relation to it, and hence we may classify motives in two ways, according as we are viewing them as *final* or as *efficient* causes of volition, that is, according to the two elements we have recognized in motives. I shall speak of the two general classes as the cognitive or static motives, and the impulsive or dynamic motives, though they differ only in the degree of prominence given to one or the other

element in motives at large. Then the first class may be subdivided according as the ends sought are subordinate or ultimate, immediate or remote. The second class is the same as given in the psychology of the motive powers of the mind. The following table represents the classification :

Motives	Static	Subordinate Ends	{ Fame. Wealth. Power. Knowledge. Art, etc.
		Ultimate Ends	{ Perfection. Happiness. Obedience, or Formal Law, etc.
	Dynamic	Impulse	{ Passion. Pleasure, etc.
		Instinct	{ Hunger. Thirst.
			{ Sex, etc.
		Reason	{ Prudence or Interest. Conscience or Duty.

The first set or the static motives represent different degrees of morality in conduct according to the scale of values attaching to the different possible ends of action. There can, of course, be but one ultimate end, but I have mentioned several in order to recognize the standpoint of different theories. But while the moral worth of the static motives may not be the same for all, responsibility is the same, other things being equal, because this depends upon mere consciousness, and not upon any degree of value. On the other hand, the dynamic series represents both different degrees of responsibility and different degrees of morality, as will be developed when we come to the problem involved in this question.

The function of the particular ends in conduct will be examined when we consider the theories of Ethics where they will be shown to illustrate the grounds upon which morality rests. At present we wish to discuss the relation of the dynamic aspect of motives to conduct. These must be taken in their order.

3. **IMPULSE.**—It is not easy to define impulse exactly. The term has done service for so many different conceptions in the course of history that any definition which happens to run

counter to one of them is sure to give dissatisfaction. On the one hand, it has often been spoken of as a blind and irrational tendency to certain kinds of action, where it is so contrasted with intelligent influence and initiatives that the impression often gains a foothold that it is an unconscious stimulus to action. Thus hunger, thirst, sex, or other natural appetites have been spoken of as impulses, partly on the ground of their irrational character and partly on the ground that their cravings do not point to any definite object apart from the satisfaction of the appetite, and they do not even seem to express any knowledge of this end until experience has shown their meaning. They are cravings in the dark, so to speak. Thus Plato contrasted them with reason and created the psychological tendency to regard them as natural momenta in the direction of certain actions, and so opposed to rational considerations. On the other hand, the term is sometimes used to denote conscious but capricious and lawless action according to the impression of the moment, and is again contrasted in this way with rational conduct, which is supposed to be regular and according to law. The two different ideas expressed by it, then, have been *appetite* and *lawless volition*, with a tendency probably for the two to shade off into each other insensibly. These, however, represent their typical forms.

It is the second of these which comes nearer to the conception which we wish here to take of impulse, the former being more closely allied to instinct as it will be treated presently. Reflex, automatic, and all influences to muscular activity that are unaccompanied by consciousness are to be discarded from the conception of it because they are not subject to either praise or blame. Impulse we shall treat as at least accompanied by consciousness of the direction of the conduct which it initiates, but it represents no law of adaptation to the order of the world. In this respect, the appetites, whether organic or of the higher order, do not resemble what passes for impulse in ordinary parlance. Hence we shall define impulse as *that influence which represents the momentary and unreflective activity of the mind.*

There are other characteristics and connections of it, but the momentary and unreflective feature is sufficient to distinguish it from the other forms of volitional antecedents. We can then illustrate it, and show what an influence it exercises upon conduct.

One of the best illustrations of impulse is the whole class of *passions*, such as anger, extreme fear, love, hate, indignation, lust and lasciviousness in their voluptuous forms, alcoholism, and the same characteristic is found in all the capricious actions indicating choice on the spur of the moment, and without reflection upon possible remoter consequences than the one aimed at. A man may strike another suddenly out of anger and repent at leisure of his rashness. Under sudden fright we may shout for aid when calm self-control would insure us greater security. Love is proverbially blind, by which is meant, not that the action which it dictates is blind, but only that the passion is too strong for care and deliberation, and prompts action for immediate satisfaction. Hatred, malice, and revenge, when they are aroused, inspire conduct without any regard to remote consequences; and so with the other regular passions. But impulse is shown perhaps more clearly in the caprices and irregularities of life than in the common vices, and it may occur in connection with emotions or feelings, having *per se* no bad character, but which under restraint and regulation might be regarded as marking meritorious qualities. If a man act under a sudden impulse of pity or sympathy, and give alms on the street without inquiry and without due regard to the consequences to the beneficiary, he is acting under a motive which must be called an impulse as defined. If again he goes off at a suggestion upon some subject, changes his resolution the next hour, and as suddenly chooses some other course of action; if on one day he indulges in a fit of drunkenness, the next day reforms, and enters on a definite career of business, as suddenly out of some whim of dislike changes this resolution, say from the intention to be a lawyer to that of being a physician, and so reflects during his life, or during any considerable period of time, this

vacillating character, he is said to be a creature of impulse merely because he is disposed to act upon the idea of the moment, and without reflection. Whenever such action is discerned it is properly described by that term. What it exhibits besides this is the utter lack of adjustment to the order of things. It is a tendency to seek gratification at the expense of unregarded consequences, and thus takes no account of the environment which regulates the individual's welfare and development. In fact it is not adjustment to environment at all, unless we should say that its gratification depends upon changes in the external world as irregular and capricious as its own action. It aims only at personal good, and takes no account of external law and order beyond the realization of some immediate result. It can represent only a possible adjustment to an environment as variable and inconstant as itself.

We may now summarize the characteristics of impulse as a motive to a certain kind of conduct: (a) It is capricious and irregular; (b) it is unreflective or non-deliberative; (c) it is momentary and passionate in its actions; (d) it neglects remote consequences for immediate ends; (e) it represents misadjustment to a fixed or constant environment, and a possible adjustment to a variable and lawless order or environment; (f) it probably represents a predominance of the dynamic or dynamogenic elements in consciousness.

From these various characteristics it is apparent that the main function of impulse seems to be what the very term implies, namely, an impelling tendency, though it is possible to exaggerate this character of it. It obtains the credit of this peculiarity from the readiness of any given suggestion to explode into a volition, and it undoubtedly illustrates a very close resemblance to that nexus between mechanical events which makes the antecedent the direct cause of the consequent. It is, therefore, only natural to conceive it as dynamic or efficient in contrast with deliberative consciousness which seems to have no efficiency whatever. A general type of impulse has generally been taken from the actions of animal existence, where we seldom find deliber-

ative habits of any kind. Their motives are the impulses of the moment, the immediate action of every desire that possesses any reasonable amount of freedom for its indulgence.

It will not be difficult, after these remarks, to determine the moral character of impulse as a motive. Of course we might open the whole question whether motives of any kind ever possess either merit or demerit. Bentham and others claim that they never possess either quality. But they are here speaking of them absolutely and out of relation to an end or result, and it is not necessary to assert this extreme view in order to maintain their moral character. General usage approves or disapproves of motives, regards them as moral, non-moral, or immoral whatever its reasons may be, and for this account it pronounces judgment upon the character of impulse as an expression of character, which is as much an object of moral admiration or censure as any result of conduct can be. Taking this tendency in the main as just, we would only say that impulse is not especially a moral characteristic, or it can be this in so slight a degree as to weaken the value of Ethics to recognize the fact at all. It is too capricious, irregular, and unreflective in its nature to provoke the respect we attach to morality. What is moral has something of *the nature of law*. It is a fixed and rational way of acting, adjustment to an external order, equilibrium of internal and conflicting forces, and the supremacy of the law of conscience, which imposes an inflexible duty upon the will, if it be nothing but the formal intention to act according to good-will itself. But impulse has nothing of such a law about it. It represents no steady object of pursuit, but only a wayward tendency to be independent of law or limitations. It is freedom without rationality, and even when it represents what we call the better instincts, such as sympathy, pity, or affection, we do not admire it for its action. We simply congratulate ourselves that it has not gone wrong on the occasion. But we expect no consistency from it, and no sacrifice of self to the larger order of the world or to the remoter goods of life. It is simply the incarnation of lawlessness, the very antithesis to

all the higher degrees of morality, and can gain only a passing tribute when its fortune carries it into the performance of an accidental good. We like too well to see law, order, and character, in the will as well as in the world, to sanctify impulse with moral qualities.

4. *INSTINCT*.—Instinct is quite as difficult to define as impulse. General usage is perhaps even more loose in its practice regarding the term than in the case of impulse. In the first place, it has been used to describe "blind and unconscious" acts, as they have been called, which in reality meant, not that the action was wholly unaccompanied by consciousness, but that there was no knowledge of the end to which the various actions actually tended. It was an easy step from this conception of instinct to that which denoted merely mechanical movements. If consciousness did not initiate, but only accompanied the action, it was no more responsible for it than for reflex or automatic movements, so that the impelling cause was outside of it. This idea was reinforced by the Cartesian dualism, which made all the actions of the animal world, called instinctive, automatic in their nature and source. Descartes regarded animals as unconscious automata, and their actions instinctive, though imitating the adjustments of intelligence. Mr. Spencer regards instincts as complex reflexes. Other evolutionists speak of them as "inherited habits" or "lapsed intelligence." The last conception of them is in reality a theory of the way they came to exist rather than a notion of their manner of action. Still other writers speak and think of them as representing a certain grade of intelligence, as conscious though not rational in the proper sense of the term. There is, perhaps, one characteristic common to all these conceptions, and it is that instinct denotes a certain fixed disposition or organic tendency of the individual. Under this conception the appetites are often called instincts, and so with any persistent inclination which shows no adaptability to change of circumstances.

We should summarize these various conceptions before giving our own account of the matter. Instinct has, therefore, variously

been conceived to be—(a) wholly unconscious and automatic impulses; (b) actions accompanied by consciousness, but not initiated by it; (c) conscious but not rational actions in the highest sense; (d) complex reflexes; (e) organic tendencies reflecting natural as opposed to volitional causes. In all these the original object was to distinguish between rational actions and those which at least resembled them in many particulars and yet could not be identified with them. Hence, where we find the law of continuity between the lowest and the highest forms of conduct, as it is illustrated from reflex to rational actions, instincts and impulses intervening between the two extremes, it becomes of importance to distinguish their nature very carefully, especially when we remember that some writers, like Leslie Stephen and many evolutionists, speak of our rational and moral desires as instincts. Such usage only shows that, in spite of the traditional contrast and antithesis between instinct and intelligence, there is often no clear distinction between them. Hence we must either make that distinction clear or abandon it altogether.

Such a distinction can be drawn without making the two conceptions mutually exclusive in all their characteristics. In fact man's nature is such that all the various influences affecting his actions, from the lowest to the highest, interpenetrate each other and overlap. No classification can be given which will exclude one impulse in all its characteristics and relations from every other. They often merge into each other. The organic appetites show affiliations with instinct, on the one hand, and with impulses, on the other, in that they are constitutional tendencies, and may develop into passions with irregular indulgence. They may also become so fully subordinated to rational control that they can be spoken of as natural desires only with the qualification that they have no specific object for their craving. Again, the passions may become so fixed and persistent a tendency in the individual, though capricious in their manifestations as to resemble the predisposition and organic stability of instincts. And still further actions often called instinctive may



be so influenced by the accompaniment of consciousness and may so thoroughly resemble intelligent adjustments of conduct that they overlap rational actions. But in spite of all this continuity and interpenetration of functions they can be radically distinguished in certain particulars. The doctrine of Ethics is interested in the distinction because of the question of responsibility, and because of the different kinds and degrees of merit attributed to human actions. Hence we shall undertake to define instinct with these facts in view, and at the same time to avoid the inconsistencies of current and common usage.

Instinct, as related to ethical problems as well as the psychological, we shall define as *a constant and organic tendency to certain actions, representing an adjustment to a definite and fixed environment*. The full meaning of this conception with additional characteristics will be brought out by its further development. In the meantime we wish to concentrate attention upon its organic and more or less fixed nature, together with the adjustment which it represents, as the true characteristics that are most important for Ethics. In its highest development it may at least be accompanied by consciousness, or even consciousness and organic impulse may combine in reference to a common end.

The most frequent types of what are called instincts are cases of bees building their honeycomb, spiders their webs, birds their nests, ants their homes and practicing their peculiar forms of industry, the migration of birds, the incubation and care of young, domestic affection, and a thousand other forms of conduct. The bee in building its honeycomb adopts the most perfect form for economy of space and material, namely, the hexagonal; but it can hardly be supposed to know this fact. All its actions show a mechanical-like regularity in this reference. The spider's web always takes a form peculiar to each species, and the same with birds' nests, even when we cannot assume any influence from experience. In all these it is difficult, if not impossible, to suppose that the creatures know why they perform their actions. It seems as certain, also, that they do not know the

ultimate end which their actions serve ; and it may be doubtful whether they have any purpose or end at all. Their mechanical-like nature and regularity seems to exclude all intelligence and so to distinguish their actions from rational conduct. But this distinction can be exaggerated, as indicated in the admission that instinct may grade off into automatic actions in one direction and intelligent actions in the other, so far as the characteristic of consciousness is concerned. The main peculiarity of them is the fact that they represent a natural and organic tendency in a particular direction, which remains more or less fixed, often resisting all influences to modify them. This is the *subjective* aspect of instinct and represents a tendency to spontaneity, that is, spontaneous action independent of disturbance or stimulus from the outside. It thus indicates a law of internal action. Its *objective* characteristic is its adjustment to a constant environment. Conceived as an "inherited habit" it would require that constancy in nature which would render its exercise possible. It is true that environment often changes, but instinct very generally displays resistance to this change. It is more especially adapted to the fixity of the external world in order to act on the line of least resistance. Hence, it is an organic tendency adapted to a certain fixity in nature. Thus the building of nests where they can be put to no use, the beaver building a dam in its cage where there is no water, geese trying to hatch stones or "dummy" eggs, the young of animals trying to suck everything that comes within the reach of their mouths when hungry, the setter showing its peculiar habits without any education, etc., all these are illustrations of organic dispositions that do not wait for their appropriate stimulus for exercise, and are no doubt called instincts for the very reason that they do not seem to show the adaptation of intelligent motives.

It is not meant here to say or to imply that instinct is invariable ; for modern observation shows that it is modifiable, at least to some extent. But it shows less variability, or varies less easily than intelligent actions. Instinct is conservative, and yields to external influences with considerable resistance. Hence its pre-

dominant tendency is to be constant and to act according to an environment to which it is organically adjusted. This is probably due to its complex nature. Many of the instincts are very complicated arrangements, and grow out of complexity of structure and function, all the elements acting in harmony either because of long experience or because of inherited momentum from previous experience, and thus make it difficult for the variation of one element without the simultaneous variation of all others. Hence instinct contrasts with impulse in this respect, is regular and constant in its activity, and less adapted to a variable environment. Thus, to state its objective characteristic, it may be said to be an organic adjustment to a constant, but a misadjustment to a varying, environment. We may, therefore, summarize its several characteristics before pointing out its ethical value: (a) It is an organic or constitutional tendency to action; (b) it is spontaneous in its exercise, or represents internal stimulus as opposed to the external; (c) it is fixed and regular in its activity; (d) it is complex in its organization and exercise; (e) it is adjusted to a definite end whether conscious or not; (f) it is preadapted to a fixed but not to a changing environment. These several characteristics define a complex phenomenon without raising the usual question, whether instinct is intelligent or not. In regard to that matter it is proper to say that I do not think consciousness is either always absent or always present with instinctive inclinations. It is probable that in its lowest forms instinct is wholly unattended by any consciousness of the tendency of its actions; that in the second stage it is only accompanied by consciousness, more or less clear of its object, and in the third stage consciousness begins to usurp its functions by subordinating it or by usurping its place. Hence it displays in this way various degrees of approximation to the higher orders of activity.

In regard to its function in the theory and conception of morality, its importance is derived from this very peculiarity as well as several other features of it. First, it resembles the moral springs in the characteristic of regularity and law which it shows. Morality must have this quality whatever else it must have.

Instinct shows that fixity and stability of direction which we always expect in moral character. In the second place, it shows direction and adaption to a remoter end than does pure impulse. Indeed we might compare impulse and instinct by saying that the former looks only to an immediate and subordinate end without regarding a remoter one, while the latter, whether conscious or not, is adapted to the remoter end. This very complexity of organism which enables the individual to live for and to realize remoter ends has a value, which, if it does not confer morality upon the actions it initiates, as we understand morality, exhibits a better objective order of creation, and represents something which morality can well afford to imitate in its regularity and teleology. Stability of character is an essential, though not the only essential quality of virtue, and instinct furnishes this characteristic. In the third place, in so far as instinct may be accompanied by consciousness it approximates again the stage of moral conduct. Regularity and concomitant intelligence give it a higher order of merit than purely unconscious and automatic actions. Lastly, its adjustment to a definite end and a constant environment give it both a subjective and an objective value which allies it very closely to the objective aspects of morality. That is to say, it embodies both a subjective and an objective regularity, which are important elements in moral conduct. Instincts may be regular and yet bad, and adjusted to bad ends. This is not to be questioned, and they will be bad precisely in their proportion to their fixity and wrong adjustment. But in spite of this they show the constitutional and organic character which we wish for perfect morality and which is a sign of some excellence wherever found, though requiring to be supplemented by rational and moral elements as defined by right adjustment and conscientiousness. Hence instinct represents some advancement upon the pure impulses. If the agent's organic desires are in the direction of right ends we can trust and admire him, whether he appreciates the morality of those ends or not, more than a creature of impulses who shows no adjustment to such ends at all. This is the reason that we

place such a being upon a higher level of excellence than a lawless creature, though he may not answer to our conception of moral as represented by rationality. We desire an agent to be at least constant, and if that constancy or stability of character is marked by correctness of objective direction we may regard its conduct as at least objectively moral, and only wish that the agent might be endowed with better perfections; that he could be as moral as his action. But until instinct becomes wholly subordinated to intelligence it does not reach the highest degree of moral excellence, no matter how true it may be to the moral ends of life. It is simply a tendency which we can rely upon to act uniformly in a variable order, at least generally, but shows less perfect adjustment than reason. It lacks the subjective characteristic of morality in all its forms, except the attribute of regularity.

5. REASON.—This is also an ambiguous term. It has a logical, a psychological, and a moral import. Its logical meaning is its ratiocinative application. Here it means *the power of drawing inferences, or of reasoning from premises to conclusions*. If the premises are general truths and the conclusions particular ones, the reasoning is deductive; if they are facts and the conclusion is a general truth, or some probable fact containing more than the premises, the reasoning is inductive. With this meaning of the term Ethics has nothing to do, though as a science it may employ the ratiocinative faculty, and in framing definite rules for life we may do the same. But it is not the source of motives for the will when taken in this sense. The psychological import of the term is that it denotes *the power of direct or intuitive insight into certain facts and truths*; for instance, that pleasure is desirable, that the truth cannot be denied when perceived, that every cause has its effect and *vice versa*, that two and two make four, etc. This function of reason has its place in Ethics in determining the ultimate good or the special ends of conduct that present themselves for consideration. It is cognitive but not impulsive in its nature, as is apparent from describing it as intuitive. The moral application of the term is

that which denotes the mind's power over natural desire. Hence in the field of Ethics *reason is the regulative and legislative power of the mind controlling and directing the various inclinations to some intelligible and ideal end*. Ever since the time of Plato, who made it the sovereign over the passions and impulses, this has been the general conception of it in Ethics. It is important to remark, however, that its true function in morality is both cognitive and directive. Plato included both these elements in his conception of it. The cognitive was its function as consciousness of an end and opposed it to desire (*ἐπιθυμία*) and impulse (*θυμός*), which could form no conception of their object until reason supervened to do so. This view of the case survived as a permanent contribution to the problem, and hence moral reason has for its first function to know *what* the ultimate object of a volition is in any particular case, and *how* it can be attained without entailing any evil consequences. But this function alone does not take reason beyond mere prudence or self-interest. Hence the second function ascribed to it is *the formation of an imperative ideal* which shall act as a constraint upon irrational desires, impulses, and passions, and a motive for its own realization. This is the legislative and directing power of reason as contrasted with mere knowledge, though knowledge must accompany it, and it is embodied in the modern conception of *conscience*, which supervenes upon prudence without setting it aside.

Having given a definition and a brief outline of the function of reason in conduct, it will be in place to describe and illustrate its operations more fully. We should, perhaps, first note an objection to the use of the term at all in the moral sphere. We have found that moral phenomena are concerned with motives and actions. Actions are the function of the will, and it is sometimes said that reason cannot act as a motive to volition. This position is especially urged by Hume, who maintains that only the "passions" (Hume's term for emotions) can move the will, while it is the business of reason merely to know truth. This objection is true enough from the ratiocinative or logical con-

ception of "reason," and also from its merely cognitive function. Mere perception is not a motive power. But as the real question in the case is only a matter of definition and practical usage, it is fair to use the term to denote moral functions, provided we do not intend by it to attribute dynamic power to abstract ideas. It is, no doubt, unfortunate that custom has employed so equivocal a term, but long-established usage cannot be set aside by a difficulty of that kind, unless a proper term is found to take the place of an objectionable one. Hence, as long as this requisite is not supplied, the only alternative is to define the sense in which "reason" is employed to denote moral functions, and refuse to be troubled by a different import in the logical field. Moreover, we have already seen that the term "motive" in Ethics does not mean merely dynamic power, but that it denotes at the same time an idea of an end, an ideational object. We even found that some moralists used it to denote only this object and so made it a purely cognitive function, excluding the impulsive element. With this conception of "motive," the term "reason" could well be employed to supply it, and no one could exclude it from moral phenomena without first limiting the notion of "motive" to suit the purpose. But since motives are complex, involving cognitive and dynamic functions combined, and since the term "reason" often denotes the whole mind as occupied with a particular object, we may well use it without doing any violence to clear thinking for describing the relation of the man to conduct, whose character is so dependent upon knowledge. It will then be largely a matter of illustration to determine what is meant by the term, and what functions are ascribed to the mind so considered.

We call conduct reasonable when a man acts in full view of his own and others' best interests. If a man yields to intemperance we say he has acted unreasonably, because he obeys a passing impulse or passion and does not calculate the ultimate injury to follow a momentary gratification. An impulse acts, as we say, without thinking. Reason in its relation to volition thinks or reflects and seeks to determine whether the remote consequences

may not bring more evil than the present good may compensate for. A reasonable man weighs the question of means and ends, brings all his knowledge to bear upon the case, and seeks to ascertain what is best or what is right, and acts accordingly, instead of "going it" blindly or yielding to the first instigations of desire. He looks before and after, determining his relation to all the contingencies in the case which might involve his happiness, his character, or his perfection. He will not be intemperate if he knows what painful consequences are involved, he will not commit murder if he knows the penalty for it. It is true that a man may act against the counsel of conscience or reason, but he is not reasonable when he does so. We call him reasonable when he perceives and acts according to the monitions of his best knowledge, keeps his passions under control, considers the harmony of his life, chooses the highest ideal of which he is capable, and pursues it with a single eye to its realization. "Reason," says Mr. Leslie Stephen, "whatever its nature, is the faculty which enables us to act with a view to the distant and the future. Consequently, in so far as a man is reasonable, he is under the influence of motives which would not be otherwise operative. The immediate bodily appetite is held in check by a number of motives to which only the reasoning being is accessible." In all this, reason means more than mere insight. It is a general term for the union of insight and emotion in the right direction. In this way it gains motive power, which it must have in order to regulate the competition of individual desires. It balances the various interests of the subject, decides the highest and enjoins the pursuit of it, not merely as an interest, but as a duty, when it has that quality. There must be a capacity for this function, call it what we will, and as reason was the earliest term to denote the unity of all the individual functions of consciousness, it was only proper and natural that a capacity comprising the conjoint action of insight, emotion, and legislation, and thus presiding over to regulate all the anarchic tendencies of the mind, should obtain that name.

But aside from further justification of the term it is most



important to observe the specific functions ascribed to reason, and to compare them with those of impulse and instinct. We have already indicated very clearly that they are complex, though they act together. The first of these functions may be called *self-consciousness*, or *deliberative consciousness*, in distinction from the unreflecting consciousness of impulse or passion and the merely concomitant consciousness of instinct. We do not mean consciousness of self in its technical philosophic sense, but the reflective turn of mind which stops to consider whether the course offered the will is the right one or not. This is a function that will overcome both the recklessness of passion and the automatism of instinct. Amid the temptations of dishonesty, of injustice, of intemperance, of voluptuous habits, of greed and ambition, and of all other moral distortions, this disposition to deliberate and reflect upon the possibilities of self is the first condition of restraining and directing either the strength or the caprice of desire. We may regard its dynamic quality as of the nature of desire itself, but directed to a different object than that of passionate desire, and modified by the cool and reflective agency of reason. But whether we choose to regard it as a higher desire, or as a distinct and independent function, its essence is one of self-conscious reflection in the first stage, a deliberative inhibition upon impulse and instinct, growing out of better knowledge and experience, and utilizing the memory of past consequences in similar emergencies to act with foresight, prudence, self-sacrifice, and it may be conscientiousness, in the future. This first characteristic, however, distinguishes reason more particularly from passion, which may be conscious but not deliberative, than it does from instinct, whose chief quality is persistence and strength whether conscious or not.

It is, therefore, the second function of reason which distinguishes it more clearly from instinct. Instinct does not deliberate; but if it did it would be reason, and if it were only accompanied by deliberation, this process would avail nothing by virtue of the priority and superior momentum of instinct. The force of instinct, as usually conceived and defined, lies in its

not being conscious, or clearly conscious of its own end, or the direction of its impulsion. But this second function of reason supplies this very desideratum. Its object can be truly called an end. Reason knows *why* it acts and what means it must employ to attain its ends. It is not only conscious of what is going on, but is conscious of the destiny of its action and can direct it to that result. Impulse lives for the present, though conscious, and takes no account of experience or of possible consequences. Instinct is adjusted to remoter ends, of which it can give no account, and employs means whose full significance it does not know. But reason utilizes experience and is conscious of both immediate and remoter ends, and thereby acquires for conduct the title of intelligent, and when it contains a course of action on the ground of its imperative worth, it adds moral to intelligent quality.

A third characteristic of reason as a function in the direction of conduct is its power of adjustability. In this it is superior to both impulse and instinct. Impulse, we found, would require a world without any unity and without any connection between immediate and remote consequences in order that the subject might even survive in it. It is, therefore, wholly unadjusted to a fixed order, but only to a changeable one. On the other hand, we found instinct to be adjusted to a constant environment and out of harmony with a variable one. Now, it is the nature of environment to be partly constant and partly variable. Some of the world's forces, be they physical or social, are more or less permanent, or at least so articulated as to work toward or to favor a common end. The best life requires such adaptation, self-control, and sacrifice as will guide the subject through many a conflict to the ceaseless purpose running through the ages. Other influences are constantly changing; the seasons, the climate, the character of the soil, industrial and social conditions, age, health, knowledge, taste, and a thousand other external agencies are changing from time to time, varying a man's interests and duties, with every locality, age, or circumstance. All these require adjustability, and as environment is neither

wholly constant nor wholly variable, the highest development requires a capacity for flexible adjustment. This is precisely what reason supplies. It is the power of adjustment to environment as a whole, at least so far as that environment comes within the ken of consciousness. It modifies conduct when the variation of conditions nullifies the obligation or removes the expedience of old laws and habits, and it holds the will to a regular and constant life when passion might lead it to ignore the eternal. Reason is thus adjustment to both aspects of environment. It makes rational concessions to change and to difference of circumstances, while it is unyielding when remoter good requires the sacrifice of an immediate pleasure. It thus shows its freedom and independence in both directions. It does not yield to every outward and capricious stimulus, and it does not blindly follow in the line of habit and instinct when survival and development require adjustment. Hence we may compare it with the other motives to action by remarking either how it supplants them or how it adds reflective and deliberative consciousness to both of them, giving it power to resist impulsive adjustment to the irregularities of life and to modify the mechanical fatalism of instinct. Impulse represents the predominance of external influence and change in the determination of conduct, freedom being found only in accepting the offer of gratification. On the other hand, instinct represents the predominance of spontaneity or internal influence, freedom consisting only in the exemption from external compulsion. But reason is the adjustment of both of these conditions, giving greater independence of external environment and less fatalism to organic functions and internal tendencies. It is, therefore, the point where all the conflicting forces of the mind meet and attain their unity, completing the adjustment of the individual, which is so important for his development and perfection.

This rational nature as a motive and regulative function takes two forms, as already indicated, Prudence or Interest and Conscience or the Sense of Duty. The difference between them requires to be carefully stated.

(a) *Prudence*.—Literally understood, prudence is simply foresight. It is the function of reason which has been most fully described as looking before and after, taking account of experience and consequences, and directing the agent through the conflicts of desire to a course of conduct which will best serve his interests in the long run. A man is prudent when he saves money against scarcity, famine, sickness, and old age, or any contingency in which he might be cut off from self-support. He is prudent when he resists the temptation to a fit of intemperance or debauchery in order to preserve his health. He is prudent when he protects all his resources against waste and loss. He is prudent again when he sacrifices an immediate interest for a remote and greater one; when he prefers the respect of the community to its indifference or dislike; when he prefers honesty for the sake of its gain; when he accepts an insult and injury rather than conduct a futile quest for justice. In all this the agent acts with reference to the greatest good to be obtained for himself. But he does not sacrifice his own good to that of others. He may sacrifice something, but it will be with more than a compensation in return. A man may pay a debt at a sacrifice before it matures only to establish his credit, not to fulfill an unconditional obligation. He may even sacrifice a desire and act for the good of others, but it will not be with the good of others in view. He will have primary reference to the compensation to be received for the sacrifice. Prudence is, therefore, looking to one's own interest, though seeing that no friction occurs with the good of others. It is thus primarily and only *individualistic* in its motive, though it may be objectively altruistic; that is, in its effects. But it does not take on the character of obligation, or a desire to limit one's own freedom and action in behalf of the welfare or the equal freedom of others, and hence is not marked by the sense of morality, or of right and wrong, as distinguished from good and bad. "Interest," says one writer, "means what is good for an individual considered from his own point of view, and without regard to similar claims of other individuals. It is the maximum of happiness or

satisfaction which he can secure under his conditions. By 'maximum happiness' is meant that distribution of satisfaction or of energies which produce them, any deviation from which on either side implies a less fullness of life. Interest, though a different conception from right or [moral] goodness, is therefore a conception of the same rank or order. In the first place interest is not mere momentary satisfaction, but implies a reference both forwards and backwards to the whole range of a person's wants. It is something permanent, something which implies orderly arrangement." But whatever its results and whatever adjustment to others' rights and interests the exercise of prudence involves, its motive and primary reference is to the individual that practices it.

This conception of conduct does not reach the stage of morality proper, or perfect virtue, for the reason that it does not *aim* equally at the good of others. It is conduct having a different and a higher merit than passion and instinct, simply because it is intelligent and conserves life under complex conditions better than these motives can possibly do. It is conduct that is careful not to conflict with morality, but does not *aim* at realizing purposely either the subjective or the objective aspect of it. It will conform to objective morality, though mainly in its negative aspect of not doing positive harm. It nevertheless contains an object which may be called moral and ought to be respected as such, namely, the higher possibilities as against the temptation of passion and momentary satisfaction, and larger freedom than is possible in the mechanical fatuity of instinct. But it does not reach the level of conscience, which moves the will by other considerations than interest alone and transfigures character as well as conduct.

(b) *Conscience*.—We shall consider only one aspect of conscience at present: a detailed analysis of it will come up in its proper place. Here we are concerned with its motive function and the quality which it bestows upon volition. It represents more specifically the moral function of reason and defines the constraint of the sense of right and duty upon the will, impelling

it to respect an unconditional ideal. Prudence is mainly insight into the most expedient of a series of conflicting alternatives and simply changes the objective, but not the subjective, direction of desire. On the other hand, conscience is mainly propulsion, combined with a sense of rightness and an entire subordination of personal to general good. It does not admit free alternatives, but selects one course as having a value and importance which not only put all others into the shade, but exclude them from consideration. It may involve the same external actions as prudence and the same objective results, but its motive is not individualistic, while it looks at the result as having a value apart from the mere interest of the subject and sets it up as an object of reverence and of unconditional duty.

The part which conscience plays in morality, besides overcoming passion and personal desire, is an important one. It subordinates individual action to the whole *consciously*. Prudence merely sees that it does not come into conflict with universal interest, while conscience sees that it serves this end directly. It will even sacrifice an individual good for that of others, the family, the tribe, or the state. It particularly insists upon action according to law, a law of will as well as of results. Its form is regularity and its motive a command. In the former quality it opposes impulse and resembles instinct, but in the latter it transcends both of them. It gives special sanctity to the will or volition, though it may not modify the nature of results. It is on this account that so many moralists have exalted the motive above everything else in right conduct. Prudence may have something of caprice in it by virtue of the necessity for a larger adaptation to a changing environment, and of the constant reference to self. It is, in other words, more in danger of transgression, as it is only the modification and control of impulse without moralizing its object. On the other hand, conscience, as a motive, has much if not all of the constancy of instinct and does for the character of the subject what correctness of judgment does for the result of conduct. It is not only a conscious choice of the right result, but *it is aiming at that re-*

*sult on its own account, whatever reference it may have to the subject itself.* It will not conflict with interest in the long run, though it sets aside an immediate one. But it does not look primarily to this interest. It regards the action and the end as having an intrinsic worth imposing a universal and absolute obligation, and so imposes a *subjective* law of duty upon the will, while prudence is much more under the *objective* law of circumstances. The subjective law of prudence is personal good, that of conscience is impersonal good. The objective law of prudence is adaptation, that of conscience is self-realization, the attainment of an ideal independent of circumstances. Morality from this source will be perfect where it is accompanied by correct judgment as to means and ends. Imperfection will arise only from mistaken knowledge and not from a perverted will, where the law of duty is observed, and hence conscience as a motive simply adds the moralization of the agent to all other considerations of the good; or to put it in terms of conceptions already distinguished, it combines virtue with the good where knowledge is not defective. The individual who exercises it is admired, not for his being a means to an end, but for his personality, for the intrinsic excellence of a life or action according to the law of freedom, of duty, and of ideal attainment. That is to say, conscience is the essence of morality where it must be estimated in terms of personality or good-will, and viewed from the standpoint of individual worth there is no other quality which stands so high in the estimation of the world. It is, therefore, the most fundamental of all the elements that make up virtue, and viewing this as expressing merely a quality of will, conscience is all that is necessary to realize it, leaving to education and experience the work of bestowing the knowledge necessary for securing correct objective results when the will is good.

In analyzing thus the functions of motives in morality we determine only its subjective side, and so the excellence or virtue of the agent. But in common conception morality contains more than virtue. It is the goodness also of something else than the mere will. The motives may determine

the character and worth of the agent. But they do not constitute the quality of any other data which are essential to complete morality, though in a world of free agents they are the most important elements to reckon upon as security for regularity and law, which are the first principles of character wherever consciousness is concerned. The objective elements and their functions, however, are determined by other considerations than the value of good-will. To them we immediately turn, and can dismiss them very briefly.

**2d. The Act.**—The act we have already divided into the subjective action and the objective action; in other words, the choice and volition for the one and the external movement for the other. The act as a whole, of course, must contain both aspects, but each has entirely different functions in relation to moral judgment. The internal act or the choice and volition are the index of character, and so are an expression of the subjective side of morality as discussed in the function of conscience. It may be a causal link in the series terminating in the result, but it determines constitutively nothing but the quality of the will, and not the quality of the result. Hence it may be regarded in this respect as doing the same as the motive, and dismissed from farther consideration. But the objective or external act is different. Taken alone it can have neither merit nor demerit. Its moral quality is purely relative—relative to the result or end to which it is directed. Its function is purely instrumental or dynamic, namely, nothing but a *means* to an end. Whatever value the end has, the means will have, and whatever demerit the end or result, so with the means. The physical movements in an act of justifiable homicide may be the same as in a case of unjustifiable homicide, and yet we do not place our judgments in the same attitude regarding both results. The quality of the act is measured by the quality of the end, and morally considered it can have no other quality. This is perhaps a truism, but there have been schools of philosophers who have spoken as if they meant to ascribe morality or immorality to actions which can be considered as nothing more nor



less than a means to an end. They in reality spoke of the whole complex phenomenon involving the purpose, action, and consequence. But opponents eagerly interpreted their language literally, while it has been the fault of the human race generally to speak of action in the abstract as if it were discussing the concrete case involving more than mere action. Hence we find homicide, theft, inaccuracy, injustice, intemperance, imprudence, etc., condemned without reference to consequences, and their opposites approved without reference to the same. In fact, not a single crime in the calendar of evils can be condemned without reference to its consequences. Its action, apart from the volition of the subject, is nothing more than physical motion, from which those very advocates of absolute morality are so strenuous to exclude the attributes of either moral or immoral. It possesses nothing but causal or instrumental quality, and is deplored or admired according as the consequences are.

**3d. The End.**—The end as already defined is the result aimed at. It is this alone, barring the question of freedom, which determines the responsibility and the morality of the *agent*, but not all the morality of the *act*, if that term is to include the objective results independent of volition, and assuming that better knowledge may enable all results to come within the ken of the agent. Whatever the end so will the agent and the act be, the agent because the end is a part of the motive, and the act because the end is the result.

**4th. The Result or Consequence.**—So far as this is independent of the end aimed at, and so far as it is not known to be connected with the end, it can only determine the objective character of conduct, and has no reference to the morality of the agent. But as long as it comes within the range of possible knowledge and can be known by experience to be involved in a given act, it will be subject matter for ethical discussion, as being involved in the objective qualities of morality as a whole, but is not a part of virtue. The function of consequences, therefore, in ethical doctrine is to determine the complementary aspect of

the good-will in considering the complex phenomenon which passes as moral or immoral.

*VII. CONCLUSION.*—The conclusion of this chapter merely calls fresh attention to the complexity of the phenomena with which we have to deal. Morality, as understood by the common mind, is not a simple thing. Now it describes only a quality of will apart from consequences actually occurring, and now it describes actions leading to avoidable consequences, if known, and again it describes the complex whole comprehending all these elements. Our duty as students is first to understand the difference between the points of view involved and not to regard as contradictories conceptions which are merely complementary factors of a complex whole. Each point of view with its conception in those limits may be correct and should be accorded fair consideration on that ground.

Again, we have discussed the subjects of morality and conscience without reference to any particular theory about it. Some conceive both as necessarily opposed to the utilitarian position. This may be true, or it may not. I certainly do not think it necessary, however, to define either of them as excluding utilitarian conceptions. In considering conscience as a motive function, I do not think it necessary to say what its object is, whether pleasure, perfection, law, obedience, or what not. It may have any or all of these for its object. Hence, in understanding the function of conscience, in morality we may consider only its mode of operation and determine its proper object afterward.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

*I. INTRODUCTORY.*—The freedom of the will has been affirmed to be an essential condition of morality and responsibility, and we must now consider whether this doctrine is true or not, or in what sense it is true, if it be so. The controversy in modern times, and especially since the acceptance of the doctrine of evolution, has been a very warm one. Perhaps it was equally so at earlier periods if we are to judge from the theories of men like Hobbes, Collins, Hume, Spinoza, and their opponents. But aside from the historical interest of the problem, it has considerable practical importance in the affairs of every-day life, individual and social. In the first place free agency, whatever it may mean, is commonly accepted as conditioning responsibility; that is, the distribution of praise and blame, and through this the right of punishment. It is believed that if we are not free agents, actions can neither be praised nor blamed, but only admired or disliked, and that no system of punishment is justifiable unless we are the free causes of our own actions. In the courts we are in the habit of excusing men when it is shown that their conduct is compulsory and involuntary. Maniacs and imbeciles are not punished for criminal actions. No measures are taken to apply to them the ordinary method of discipline and correction, and it is simply because we are not in the habit of regarding them as responsible, while they are often spoken of as not being free agents. Slaves are denied freedom, and all persons in like subservience to the will of others are said not to be free in their actions. Their masters or superiors are treated as responsible for the conduct enjoined upon them. Reflex and automatic actions are regarded as necessary or not free, and so

with any action connected with our physical person and not willed by us, because they are initiated by antecedents which are beyond our control, and which leave no other alternative in the case open to choice. The person is in no way praised or blamed for such actions, and punishment to prevent them is absurd. Hence, to put the whole matter most briefly, wherever we use the expression, "This act is not free," we mean to take it wholly out of the category of moral actions, subject to punishment, and to place it among those which, like physical actions, are not amenable to any moral judgment whatever. The consequences of denying freedom, therefore, seem to be very far-reaching. They seem to involve the whole moral and social constitution of society, and also even the defensive action of the individual. I do not intend this statement of consequences to be taken at present as an argument for freedom, because it may be that they will have to be accepted, and social institutions modified to suit the facts. But they may be pointed out in order to obtain a clear conception of the problem before us. They are necessary for the purpose of showing that we cannot take the conception of freedom in the abstract, or out of all connection with its concrete relations to social phenomena and institutions, and decide whether it is valid or not, and at the same time imagine that these implications are untouched by our conclusions. We cannot give up the conditions of certain facts and yet maintain the validity of those facts. We must either defend the freedom of the will or give up the legitimacy of the phenomena supposed to depend upon it.

But it is to be remarked, on the other hand, that there is a great deal of excusable confusion on this subject due to the equivocal meaning of the terms and propositions in the controversy. Neither party gives sufficient attention to clearness and to definition of data in the problem. One party uses freedom in one sense and the other in another sense, and both parties use it in different senses in different connections. It is therefore no wonder that there is controversy and confusion in the matter. Hence we must assert emphatically that the most important step

in discussing the problem is the clear definition of the question or questions at issue. This requires a careful examination of what is meant by the several theories of volition and by the term freedom. The question whether we are free or not depends wholly upon the sense in which we use the term, and there is no use to either advocate or oppose any doctrine regarding it until we understand ourselves and the conceptions involved. We shall therefore proceed to state carefully the fundamental elements of the problem and reduce it to its simplest terms.

II. *ELEMENTS OF THE PROBLEM.*—There are two things to be analyzed in the matter before our attention: they are the conception of free action and the conception of the theories regarding it. When we have obtained a clear idea of these we can then pronounce judgment upon them one way or the other.

1st. *Uses of the Term Freedom.*—There are three general and distinct meanings of the term freedom, and all with entirely different implications. We shall call them *Liberty*, *Spontaneity*, and *Velleity*, and explain each in its order. Liberty and freedom are often used interchangeably, but there is a difference in some of their connections, describing what we wish to emphasize here, and hence we wish for the sake of clearness and convenience to use the term for a special purpose. We might use the phrase “physico-political freedom” instead, which is exactly what we mean to express by liberty, but it is too cumbersome, and as good authority as well as frequent usage stands for the employment of the term to denote what can be expressed by physico-political liberty, we shall do little violence to habit if we somewhat restrict the term for important purposes. We may seem a little arbitrary, but if our definition of it is kept in mind, rather than its frequent identification with freedom, there will be no difficulty with it, and at the same time we shall have a clear and convenient conception to be distinguished from the other two kinds of freedom. We shall therefore take up and define each one in its order.

1. *LIBERTY.*—Liberty, as here conceived and in its restricted import, we shall define as *exemption from external restraint*. This

restraint may be either physical or social, the latter being meant to include all political restrictions upon human action. We call a person free, or assert that he has liberty, when external forces either do not determine his action or do not determine the circumstances limiting the alternatives between which he has to choose. Thus, a man in prison is not free, or has lost his liberty. A man who can do as he pleases without suffering a penalty for it, is said to have his liberty, or to be free. Seasons and climate limit a man's liberty in the matter of wearing clothes; he is not free to go without them in any sense that he can escape the consequences. A slave is said not to be free, in which we do not mean that he cannot possibly do as he pleases, or that he cannot help obeying his master, but that he must do so at his risk, that he is liable to certain consequences for following his spontaneous desires. We give him his liberty when we remove the restrictions which prevent natural and desirable action on his part, and force upon him a choice which he would not otherwise make. All men are hemmed in by some such restraints, either physical or social. Climate, gravitation, seasons, geographical conditions, political institutions, economic conditions, and a thousand other influences are at work to limit the satisfaction of desire. To that extent we can say that we are not free, whereby we mean merely that we cannot do as we please without incurring disagreeable consequences. Hence, freedom or liberty, used to describe exemption from these restraints, means only a *condition in which we act according to our natural desires*. The term is used most frequently to describe a political condition—political liberty, whereby we mean exemption from the laws, customs, and restraints which put one man in subjection to the will of others. But in this sense no man is absolutely free, every one is under some restrictions, and perhaps ought to be. They do not compel him to act in a given way, but make the alternatives so unpleasant that none except the permitted course will probably be chosen. In this sense freedom or liberty is a *privilege* rather than a *power*, a privilege to act with impunity rather than the faculty of alternative action. Thus a man is not at liberty to commit murder and escape

the risks of punishment, but he has the power to commit the murder and to accept the penalty, or not to commit it and thus to be free from risk. Freedom, then, as liberty is simply exemption from restraint or limitation. We take up next the second meaning of the term.

2. SPONTANEITY.—Spontaneity may be technically defined as *subjective causation*, or the origination of one's own act. It might be called autonomy or self-initiative were it not that sometimes these terms are used synonymously with freedom in the third sense where consciousness and deliberation are involved. But I do not yet wish to condition spontaneity by deliberation, or even consciousness. As here used the term simply defines *self-motion* or *activity*, whether conscious or not, as contrasted with mechanical action which is not originated by the subject in which it occurs, or at least, is never supposed to do so. All physical motion or action is said to be necessitated, because the body in motion is supposed to be incapable of causing its own motion. It is inert, and whatever activity it manifests is transmitted to it from without, unless we describe its reaction and resistance to its own powers. But movement and its transmission to other bodies cannot, so far as human experience goes, be originated by matter in itself, but must be received from without, and if any external body or cause act on another, the effect is inevitable and necessary. It is neither conscious nor one of two possible alternatives under the same conditions. But if the agent or subject originate any action of itself and without stimulus from the outside it would certainly be a self-initiated act, a spontaneous creation of its own power, not a creation of a substantive thing, but of an act, event, or phenomenon. Moreover, even if a stimulus does act on a subject, and the effect is wholly different from a mechanical one, something must be attributed to the subject rather than to the stimulus. Thus, if I see a fire and run to watch the process of extinction, my action can hardly be compared to the effect of one billiard-ball upon another when struck. I originate the action of running, though the sight of fire is necessary to explain the occasion and the motive of it. Spon-

taneity thus expresses a power in contrast with *inertia*, and denotes capacity to originate action. This, of course, is conscious. Not to seek for analogies of it in the resistance of material bodies, and their modifying influence on other bodies when struck, it is probable that automatic and instinctive actions are the first types of spontaneity in organic life. They are certainly not caused by any agency without the person or subject of them. We may claim that they have their stimulus in the organism and so far must be classed with ordinary mechanical actions, and I do not care to dispute this view. But they are certainly not the necessary effect of external conditions as the movement of one billiard-ball by another is. They belong to the subject and the conditions of its nature.

However, it is not necessary to push the application of the term spontaneity into the field of the purely unconscious. It is practically admitted to be a fact by all who grant the existence of conscious action, but deny that a man's action might have been otherwise than it was. Every man must be the cause of his own volitions; otherwise they are not *his* volitions or acts at all. If I move my arm to pick up my pen, it is not the pen which "caused" the act, nor is it my surroundings, the physical objects about me. If they produced the effect, they should continue to do so as long as they are about me. There may have been "reasons" in my surroundings, or in the special conditions under which I am placed for picking up my pen, but "reasons" are not external causes, and they may not be causes at all. Similarly, if I steal, the act arises from conditions within myself, not from the action of external objects; otherwise every conscious agent would be expected to steal immediately that he came near the same objects, nay, would be forced to do so. It might even be true that every one would steal under the same "conditions." But these conditions would have to be *internal*; for it is a fact that the sameness of external conditions does not issue in the same results with different persons. Hence the only way to explain the difference of effect is to refer it to the subjective conditions and nature of the agent. This is regarding him as



the cause of the effect instead of referring it to a foreign influence. Now, in all actions representing an end, a conscious purpose, the subject is the cause. All other "conditions" are mere circumstances or occasions, opportunities which consciousness observes, weighs, and measures. In the sense, then, that a man is the cause of his own actions we can ascribe to him the attribute of spontaneity, the power of originating himself certain acts, which are properly called volitions. Freedom is used to describe this phenomenon in order to name a fact which must be distinguished from mechanically caused events. We may hold that spontaneous actions cannot have been otherwise, if we like, but they are not produced by the transmission of force, as in the physical world, from one body to another. They originate with the subject of them. Spontaneity is thus *self-initiative*, whether we choose to regard it as conscious or unconscious, and is opposed to *foreign initiative*. It is self-movement as opposed to inertia, and is only a name for mental causation as contrasted with mechanical causation. This will be as true under a materialistic as under a spiritualistic philosophy.

3. VELLEITY.—Velleity is *the capacity of alternative choice*, or, as it is sometimes called, contrary choice. I have chosen the term from the medieval Latin, *velleitas* (Latin *velle*, to wish or to will) in order to distinguish, as nearly all writers do, medieval or modern, between merely spontaneously caused actions and actions that might have been otherwise, conditions being the same. Whether there are any such remains still to be determined. But we certainly have a conception of them, and often use the term freedom to denote them. The doctrines of responsibility and punishment certainly assume that certain actions ought, and therefore could, have been otherwise than they are, that the agent could have chosen the right as well as the wrong. If they could not have been otherwise, it seems unreasonable to act toward the agent as if they could have been different. Punishment either assumes that this is possible or that it can modify them afterward and prevent this repetition. Hence it is a question whether, conditions being the same, the power of alternative

choice exists. But it is this which is perhaps more frequently implied by freedom than the first two meanings when speaking of free will. We are not ready, however, for the argument on one side or the other. Our present duty is only to fix the conception of freedom as velleity, and to indicate the distinction between this and the other conception expressed by the same term.

There is a peculiar relation existing between the three. In the first place, liberty, as we saw, is exemption from foreign restraint; velleity does not require any such exemption. If it exist at all, it may not, must not, be influenced by any such limitations whatever. In the second place, spontaneity, as defined, is subjective causation, but velleity must include this and adds to it the capacity of alternative choice. He who can act otherwise than he does on any occasion must be the cause of his own actions; but he who is the cause of his own actions may not be able, under similar conditions, to do otherwise. In other words, velleity is a conception which includes or implies spontaneity, but spontaneity does not include velleity. This is an important fact bearing on the liability to illusion caused by this peculiar relation. Velleity, however, will be the name for this differential quality, known as the power of alternative choice. It is illustrated most clearly perhaps in the phenomenon of deliberation. Whether this proves anything or not in regard to freedom is not the question at present. But it does show that the agent is conscious of one or more alternative volitions as presented, whether he be able or not to choose any but one of them under the conditions. This will explain the conception which might naturally arise respecting his freedom as velleity. Responsibility seems to imply much more than mere causality. A man with nothing but instincts to determine his conduct would be the cause of his actions, but no one would attribute responsibility to him. Hence more than mere spontaneity is required to establish that quality of rational beings. If, then, we could add the capacity of alternative choice to subjective causation, or velleity to spontaneity, we could sustain responsibility. In fact, this last is often identified with freedom. We shall find later a reason to distinguish

them much as we have distinguished the second and third conceptions of freedom. In the meantime, however, freedom in every sense of the term can be regarded as a condition of responsibility, while calling attention to the fact that the capacity of alternative choice implied in the latter is taken to denote freedom. With this definition of the various uses of the term we may turn to a statement of the real problem involved in the controversy between those who affirm and those who deny the freedom of the will.

**2d. The Issue in Regard to Freedom.**—This issue between the disputants regarding free will does not concern all the meanings of the term. It has in reality to do with only one of them, namely, *velleity*. But the fact that the term has three distinct meanings is very important, as showing the illusion and fallacies of certain arguments, both for and against freedom. This fact we shall make clear again. At present it is an excuse both for the analysis we have given and for the sifting of the issue down to its simplest terms.

In the first place, if freedom be taken in the sense of liberty, or exemption from external restraint, there is no doubt whatever that man is *not* free. No one, probably, would deny this fact. There is, or ought to be, perfect agreement in regard to this conception of the case. The controversy, therefore, between the two schools cannot turn upon this view of the problem. Secondly, if freedom be taken in the sense of spontaneity, there can be no denying that man *is* free in all actions that can be called his own; that is, his volitions. Nothing need be implied here one way or the other about reflex and automatic actions, and such other movements as are connected with the physical person, but not willed by the conscious agent. We are dealing only with volitions, which are conscious acts, and are not anything else. These must be free or self-caused as opposed to being mechanically caused. All parties, as we have already remarked, are agreed again on this issue. Hence the controversy cannot turn upon the question whether spontaneity is a fact or not. This is not the conception of freedom which is denied. There remains,

therefore, only the third conception, namely, *velleity*, or the possibility of alternative choice, as the one about which the dispute can turn. The fact is that this is the only one that can present any rational ground for doubt. It is not the only conception of it that enters into the questions of ethics or conditions other characteristics of man, namely, responsibility. But it is the only conception of free will that can be open to dispute; that is, of which there may be two opinions. Many of the arguments, however, have no bearing upon this conception of it. Nevertheless, in examining them as we discuss this one true issue, we shall be obliged to state them as they are advanced, and can then estimate their value as we perceive their relation to the question. When the proper time comes we shall state the arguments on both sides, but only with the understanding that the issue, whether the arguments are relevant or not, is only concerning *velleity*, and not freedom in every sense of the term. In the meantime, before undertaking to consider this controversy, another aspect of the issue requires to be analyzed very carefully, namely, the theories of volition and the conceptions which they imply. We shall probably find as many sources of confusion and equivocation in them as in the diverse notions of freedom which we have examined.

**3d. The Theories of Volition.**—One classification of these theories makes them only two which are opposed to each other. They are *Necessitarianism* or *Determinism*, and *Libertarianism* or *Freedomism*. *Necessitarianism* or *determinism*, as conceived in this classification, maintains that man's actions are necessitated, that he cannot act otherwise than he does. Each volition is conceived, by this theory, as inevitable under the circumstances, as inevitable as the fall of an apple under the attraction of gravitation, if it be unsuspended or unsupported. In its extreme form a man is not blamed for his conduct. It is treated as the necessary effect of a cause over which the agent has no control. If a man steals, he cannot help it; it is the result of his character or his circumstances. If he does not steal, regard for property is just as fatal in deciding his conduct as disregard for it is in the

case of the thief. The difference between the two persons is in their antecedent characters. They have not the same powers, such as freedom supposes. On the other hand, libertarianism or freedomism maintains that man is free, that he has the power of alternative choice or velleity, and that his actions are not necessitated in any sense of the term. It holds that man makes his own character, so far as that is an expression of volition at all, and that where it is not such a product it has no causal power to determine his volitions. The antithesis or opposition between this theory and that of necessity is complete, and there would seem to be no choice except between the two. The terms, of course, are liable to all the illusions attending their equivocal meaning. But after restricting the issue to the power of alternative choice the opposition between them would seem to be clear and our choice restricted to one or the other.

It is important to remark, in spite of this conception of the case, that the matter is not quite so clear. Both the historical treatment of free will and the arguments used for and against it assume at least one more point of view, and also conceptions of the problem involving more than one idea of freedom. On this account it is necessary to give what we regard as a more complete and satisfactory classification of theories, defining the various possible attitudes toward the problem. The two theories already mentioned seem both to admit that volitions are caused, and in this view of the case the opposition must be between two different kinds of causes. But all moralists have not been agreed that freedomism admitted the subordination of volition to the law of causation. Hence there have been at least two forms of that theory, and there has also been more than one form of necessitarianism. But as the argument has most frequently turned upon the connection of causation with volition, this principle should be the basis of a true classification, and since freedom in the minds of many persons has been understood to imply that free actions are not caused, we must recognize a theory representing that point of view.

The most general classification of theories represented by his-

torical controversies is that which divides them into *Determinism* and *Indeterminism*, or the freedom of indifference, sometimes called *Indifferentism*. Determinism maintains that volitions are caused. We must remember, however, that usage has not always opposed this idea to freedom. Kant and Leibnitz and others have represented themselves as freedomists and yet determinists at the same time. As we use the term here, therefore, it is not meant to oppose anything but indeterminism, but asserts only that volitions are subject to the law of causation, like all other events; but it does not say anything about the kind of cause concerned. On the other hand, indeterminism does not represent a single type of conception. It is only in one of its senses that it is distinctly opposed to determinism as a theory of caused volitions. But it represents three different forms of condition for free action. They are (a) causeless volitions; (b) motiveless volitions; and (c) indifferent volitions. It is only the first of these that is distinctly opposed to modern determinism, but it has been held by many writers as a primary condition of freedom that volitions should be uncaused or independent of the law of causation. This was the claim of Hume, is the claim of Spencer, and of all who use, as one writer does, the following language: "Believing as the author does that change is unthinkable except in the category of causation, the affirmation that the will is free, or that the self is free to will, seems thoroughly unwarranted either by fact or reason." On the other hand, many medieval and some later writers have held that a volition in order to be free should be motiveless. They admitted that if it were caused by "motives," the strongest would prevail and that this would cut off the possibility of alternative choice. Hence they conceived free volition as motiveless. The famous illustration of this idea was the ass between two bundles of hay (asinus Buridani). The idea was that an ass placed between two bundles of hay would be equally attracted by both of them, and if under this condition he could not choose to eat, he must starve. The determinist said he must either starve or the motives were not equal. The freedomist held that the

attractions must be equal, and yet it was a fact that the ass would eat of one or both bundles of hay. Both sides, however, agreed that if free and the two motives were equal the volition of the ass had to be motiveless, because the two opposing attractions neutralized each other. Such is the famous conception of the freedom of indifference as action without a motive. The third conception of indeterminism is very much like the second, though it does not affirm that free action must exclude motives. It simply maintains that it should be as indifferent to motives as to any other mental fact. It admits the *concomitance* and denies the *causality* of motives.

But as the freedomist has often admitted that volitions are caused, and only asserted that the causation was free as opposed to necessary, the theory of determinism divides into two forms. I shall call them *objective* determinism and *subjective* determinism. The former would be properly named also *physical necessitarianism*. This is the conception that would refer all actions to the law of mechanical causation or initiation from without. All physical movements are caused by external impulsion or influence and do not originate spontaneously or from within the subject. The stroke of a ball, the fall of a stone or a tree, the expansion of matter under heat, the growth of organic life, the changes of the seasons, etc., are all necessitated events. Mechanical necessitarianism, if seriously held by any one, would maintain that volitions are of the same type of events. They might occur wholly within the subject, but nevertheless be the product of the brain, which is a physical force external to the volition and the subject itself only of mechanical causes. This is to say that volition so conceived is only one in a series of events having their point of transmission in the brain. If this be true the will cannot be free in any sense of the term, except possibly spontaneity, because it would be nothing more than the brain itself in the exercise of certain functions.

On the other hand, subjective determinism, while it is opposed to mechanical necessitarianism; that is, to the theory that all

events whatsoever are the effect of causes foreign to the subject in which they occur, is not opposed to the conception that volitions may be quite as uniform and unalterable as if they were mechanically initiated. It, therefore, divides into two forms, which I shall call *psychical necessitarianism* and *freedomism*, according as volitions are the effect of *spontaneity* or of *velleity*. Psychical necessitarianism admits that volitions are not externally caused, but are the product of the subject. However, it opposes the conception that alternative choice is equally possible. It is founded upon the prevalence of the strongest motive, a phenomenon conceived after the analogy of the mechanical law regarding the resultant of physical forces, and upon the doctrine that a man *must* act in accordance with the bent of his character. That is to say, it holds that whatever other courses of action may be conceived by the subject only one of them is possible to him, his nature being what it is, and that our inability to tell beforehand what the subject will do is due wholly to our ignorance of the complex conditions constituting his character. On the other hand, freedomism simply affirms that man can choose equally between two alternatives, and so is opposed alike to physical and to psychical necessitarianism.

The following tabular outline is a *résumé* of the classification just given :

Theories of Volition	Indeterminism	Causeless Volitions = (Spontaneous Generation).	
		Motiveless Volitions = (Automatism).	
		Indifferent Volitions = (Indifferentism).	
	Determinism	Objective Determinism	Absolute = Fatalism.
		or	
		Physical Necessitarianism	Relative = Mechanism.
		Subjective Determinism	Psychical Necessitarianism or Univolism.
		or	
		Mental Causation	
			Freedomism.

In stating the real issue involved in the controversy about free-



dom, it is important to note the number of possible antitheses expressed by this classification, and to indicate, as in the conception of freedom, just where the only real and true opposition exists. It must be remembered, however, that the classification does not attempt in all cases to avoid cross-division, which a strictly logical system would do. But it endeavors only to state the traditional conceptions and antitheses with as clear a view of them as is possible in the case. Thus historically indeterminism and determinism are opposed to each other, and it has been true also historically that motiveless volitions were intended to express indeterminism, but in reality they are not opposed to determinism or caused volitions. The only real antagonism in the case can be between determinism and indeterminism as causeless volitions or spontaneous generation. This is an inconsistency in historical thought, which can be eliminated only in either of two ways—either by abandoning the term indeterminism as properly describing them, or by changing the principle of opposition between this and determinism.

But in ascertaining the real issue between the two schools of thought we have only to note that in later times it is everywhere admitted, with a few exceptions, that volitions can be neither causeless nor motiveless, nor indifferent to a particular one. On this supposition freedom has either to be denied or regarded as compatible, perhaps identical, with determinism. In fact, as long as determinism means nothing more than the fact that volitions, like other events, must be subject to the law of causation, it cannot be opposed to a doctrine of freedom affirming that volitions are caused by the *subject*. If necessitarianism, or determinism, as employed by some writers, is to oppose freedom at all it must place the antithesis upon some other principle than causation without any qualifications.

Again, there is a clear antithesis between objective or physical and subjective or mental determinism, so that if one of them be true regarding volitions the other cannot be. But as no one, not even the materialist, supposes that volitions are caused by external objects, the opposition to freedom cannot be made from

the standpoint of mechanical causation external to the organism. All are agreed, as has been already affirmed, that man is the cause of his own actions. The only remaining question is whether he *must* choose as he does, or whether he could equally choose otherwise than he does. The antitheses, then, if it is to represent anything real in actual human opinion on the problem of free will, must be found in the distinction between freedomism as defined in the above classification and psychical determinism or univolism.\* The real issue, therefore, sifts itself down to a question between two kinds of subjective determinism. While other antitheses logically exist, they represent a wholly false conception of the real problem, and while they indicate past and historical theories regarding volition, they do not represent anything at present worth contending about. No consequences to ethical doctrines are involved in any of them but the last. Hence the controversy must be confined to the issue between freedomism, and univolism or psycho-dynamism. All arguments not tending to establish one of these and to refute the other are absolutely irrelevant to the problem.

### III. FACTS AND ARGUMENTS AGAINST FREE WILL.—

In stating these arguments we shall not have exclusive reference to the issue as we have defined it really to be. There is every reason to respect historical conceptions; that is, past ideas of the case, and their influence upon many thinkers to-day where a little circumspection would both discover illusion and simplify the issue. Consequently we shall state all the facts and principles which we are likely to find among present and past controversialists, and which are used to deny freedom in some sense of the term. Their relevancy can be discussed in the proper place. But they will be stated in their order and as briefly as possible.

\* I have deliberately coined the word "univolism" (Latin *unus* and *volo*) for the convenience and economy of a single term. Besides, it has the advantage of expressing etymologically the *singleness* of the volition, or of the course open to choice, so called, and contrasts very well with freedomism as the theory of *velleity* or alternative choice. Univolism thus expresses the only tenable position which can be taken by a theory calling itself necessitarianism. *Psycho-Dynamism* might also be used for the purpose.

**1st. The Universality of Causation.**—This argument when stated is that all events are subject to the law of causation, and as volition is an event it must come under that law, and as causation is supposed to necessitate the event which it causes volitions would appear to be necessary and not free.

**2d. Man's Subordinate Place in Nature.**—This argument is a special application of that from universal causation, as perhaps most of them are. But it is not always realized to be such, and hence has a force of its own. It conceives man as a dependent creature and all his conduct limited and determined by powers superior to his own. It is unquestionably true that man is a mere atom compared with the number and greatness of the forces that subordinate him to themselves. Nothing has emphasized this more distinctly than modern astronomy and the theory of evolution. The one shows the immensity of the forces in space that are related to him and condition his activities, and the other shows what limitations in time are in the way of attaining an ideal which only slowly realizes itself.\* Theology again with its conception of God, which only adds personality to the power recognized by natural science, and retains the idea of man's extremely finite capacities, illustrates the same conception. Man's dependence for existence and for his capacities upon these vast agencies, and the terrible limitations which they impose upon his choice, might well frighten him in his claims of freedom. Freedom seems to imply independence of limitations, but finding that the universe subordinates man wholly to its own laws and activities it is only natural that the consciousness of such a fact should humiliate the pretensions of all creatures. At any rate, it appears to those who are conscious of this dependence that freedom would imply superiority to the laws of nature.

**3d. The Prevalence of the Strongest Motive.**—This argument conceives the motive as determining the volition. It must be the antecedent of every conscious choice and act, and we have been accustomed to regard the end chosen as an alternative to others as representing the strongest motive. A reason always

seems necessary for one choice rather than another, and preference implies a stronger desire for the alternative chosen. Now, from the supposition that motives are causes, on the one hand, and from the analogy of prevailing or stronger forces in the physical world with the necessary character of their effects, it is very natural to infer that a man cannot will otherwise than he does, that the strongest motive always prevailing, he has no real alternative to the volition chosen. The argument gets much of its cogency from its analogy with the law of resultant forces, which is purely a mechanical and necessary law.

**4th. The Influence of Character.**—Character is a fixed way of acting, or it is that fixed quality in the nature of an individual according to which we always expect to see him act. A man *must* act according to his nature and he cannot act otherwise. Not to be able to act otherwise than he does is taken as a denial of freedom. As a man's nature is, so are his deeds. Thus if we find a man addicted to intemperance we explain his habit, not only by the strongest motive, but also by a certain predisposition in his constitution, physical or mental. He is said to have a tendency which predetermines him to drink. So with theft, homicide, vice, cruelty, and all other criminal acts which manifest themselves in a permanent disposition to commit them. We come to think that the criminal cannot help doing what he does, and all because his character inclines him that way and does not permit that intellectual balance of ideas and feelings which would regulate the will either for prudence or for righteousness.

Then it is a man's nature to be hungry, to be thirsty, to feel sensations when touched, to think, to remember, to perform reflex and automatic actions, and none of these are said to be free. Why except the will and its actions? Will not the nature of the subject show as much inevitableness in the field of the will as in that of the intellect and the emotions? Does not character decide as necessarily a man's volitions as it does his thoughts and feelings? It certainly seems to show as much regularity of purpose and conduct as natural laws, and may not the

fact be due to similar causes, to fixed conditions which prevent alternative choice in spite of appearances to the contrary? Impulse and instinct show, one of them a fixed tendency to adjustment with a variable medium, and the other an organic tendency to act without regard to changes of environment. We do not suspect freedom, in the latter case at least, and it is only an expression of the nature of the subject. In conscious actions, such as theft, vice, dishonesty, injustice, intemperance, etc., a man seems either to be the victim of the strongest motive, as in impulse, or the slave of his nature, as in instinct. Moreover, is not character but a name for a higher instinct, a fixed tendency, in spite of the presence of consciousness? Will the fact that the character is good affect the question? Is it not, whether good or bad, merely a quality of natural constitution, which fixes once for all the direction of the will, just as a genius for mathematics or for philosophy fixes the nature of one's ideas? If thus compelled by character to adopt a given course in preference to another, a man's conduct does not seem to exhibit that equilibrium between two alternatives which is supposed to define freedom. Hence the limitations of nature and of habit, which is "a second nature," are such as to give human conduct all the regularity and certitude of actions which are universally regarded as necessary rather than free.

**5th. The Influence of Heredity.**—This argument is a special application of the one from character, but always appears stronger to the mind because of its peculiar implications. Character, as we ordinarily use it, may express nothing more than habit, or the uniform way in which a man *does* act and that enables us to estimate the probabilities of future action. But being itself presumably the product of will, we do not feel the force of attributing volition to character as its cause unless we intend to convey by it a quality which is not a product of our own choice and habits. We are, or have been, accustomed to assume that every individual comes into the world without any special bent in one direction and that he learns to act in a special way by experience. The empirical school of psychology has always

taught a doctrine that practically agreed with the traditional assumptions of free will, namely, that the mind is a *tabula rasa* and has to learn everything by experience, there being no innate "practical principles" any more than there are innate theoretical principles or truths. This is to say that there is no special character or disposition to determine the will in one direction rather than another. But the school of psychology which opposes empiricism, or the derivation of everything from the experience of the individual, adheres to the doctrine that the subject is naturally endowed with certain constitutional faculties and propensities from which he has no escape and which determine the direction of his life. He has not the power to banish them from his nature. The doctrine of heredity comes in to reinforce this opinion. Whatever we may suppose the ancestor to have been, and granting that his character was a product of his experience, it does not always seem to be the case with his successor, who inherits a predisposition to certain kinds of action. Here the power of habit transmits itself from one generation where it shows at least some instability to another where it seems to have all the stability and domination of an instinct, and instinctive is presumably not free action. A man is born with a hereditary tendency to drink, to theft, to vice, to criminality in general, and this means that he has not the nature to feel and appreciate any other alternative than the one to which he is predisposed. We might say that he could choose otherwise if he so desired. But it is the want of any other desire that is his defect and which indicates the sole possession of the one affecting his will. Had he another desire he would be as much the victim of that, whether good or bad, as the one disposed actually to determine his conduct. We are here disposed to assume that if only the character is good there is more freedom than if it is bad. But this is an illusion. Heredity shows a constitutional tendency in one direction, whether good or evil, and so determines the most decided limitations to any expectations that the agent will have free control over his passions. It is a predetermination of the subject's life and

action, and seems to establish an overwhelming objection to the possibility of alternative choice. It is an inborn trait which pre-determines the strongest motive and shuts out others from successful competition with this one tendency. In every individual whom we find handicapped by any marked hereditary tendencies, we instinctively feel that he is to be pitied or admired according to his endowment, and not according to his action. We do not blame him so severely, but rather feel compassion for him, if the inheritance be a bad one; nor do we bestow as much praise upon his conduct, if we find it merely the result of a natural aptitude which might yield to any change of circumstances (and we must remember that even instincts are variable), as we should when we know it to be rational rather than a merely hereditary and instinctive following of the line of least resistance. All of these facts seem to point to a limitation at least, and perhaps an exclusion, of freedom from the qualities of the subject, when heredity produces an unbalanced soul and fixes the direction of its inclinations.

**6th. The Mechanical Regularity of Habit.**—The force of this argument lies in the fact that it seems to attest the existence of a predominant tendency to act in a given direction. It is not the habit itself which is regarded as the limiting cause of volitions that are supposed not to be free, but it is merely a fact which indicates the momentum of the mind and attests the prevailing motive and the more or less fixed character of the agent which are presumed to contradict freedom. We often see habits which take such possession of the individual that they seem as strong as instincts and as irresistible as passions. They act in season and out of season, making a mere machine of the subject and exhibiting conduct that cannot be distinguished for regularity and blindness from the actions and movements of physical bodies. Surely such a subject cannot be free.

**7th. The Predictability of Human Actions.**—This argument is designed to compare volitions to events which are regarded as necessary because they occur with the fatuity of all physical phenomena and cannot be prevented or made variable. Thus we

can predict the eclipses of the sun and moon, the exact hour and minute of the tides, the return of a comet, the position of the planets, the recurrence of the seasons, and even to some extent the weather, our limitations in all instances being due to our ignorance of the complex conditions determining the phenomenon. But where we know the conditions, such as the action of gravitation, we can predict with unerring certainty the effect of them. All such phenomena are invariable and necessary. There is no caprice or variation about them, and this is because they are under the control of natural laws, which operate without either the consciousness or the possibility of alternative action. The regularity of their action is an evidence of their source, so that if we find human conduct showing a similar regularity and predictability we would at once suspect that it was under the control of a similar inevitable cause. Now, as a fact, observation shows a remarkable regularity in the amount of suicide and other crimes in different localities and conditions of the world, a regularity that enables us to predict, according to the measure of our knowledge of the conditions, the amount of it likely to occur from year to year. Also illegitimacy shows about the same percentage from period to period and even has its special ratio for the different seasons. Vagrancy can now be calculated to a reasonable degree of accuracy for the various countries, and this with suicide and illegitimacy does not greatly modify its ratio with the increase of population, as we should naturally expect that it would vary. The amount of poverty in large cities due to intemperance shows a very striking resemblance in all cases. Now, if we only knew the conditions of all conduct so well as in these cases we might be able to forecast just what was likely to take place, while it is presumed that there can be no foretelling of free actions. Where any other possibility exists, or any number of such possibilities other than the one actually willed, it would seem that prediction would be excluded from the case. We could only wait until the event occurred and register it. That is to say, predictability seems to rest upon conditions which wholly contradict the possibility of



alternative events, and so to contradict freedom which supposes that possibility.

**8th. Predestination or Foreordination.**—This is the theological argument against freedom. It includes the previous argument from predictability or prescience, but also contains the idea of predetermination by some external agency. So far as it denotes this external fixation of events the argument is an overwhelming one to most persons who realize the limitations which such a condition imposes upon alternative choice.

**IV. ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF FREE WILL.**—The defense of freedom involves two classes of argument which do not have equal value. One of them consists merely of rebuttal of arguments on the other side, and perhaps goes no farther than showing a verdict of "not proven" against necessitarianism; the other attempts to establish definitely the position of the freedomist and so to distinctly refute the opposing theory. These I shall call respectively the *negative* and the *positive* arguments for freedom. The first class simply removes the difficulties created by the arguments already considered, and the second advances to direct proof. Each of these classes will have to be considered in its proper order.

Before examining these arguments, however, it will be most important to make some observations on the general question in order to measure rightly both the strength and the weakness of either side of the controversy. It is a fact which ought not to be forgotten that both schools of disputants assume that whatever is proved in the case of one set of men applies to all. We are in the habit of assuming that all men are equal, an assumption that comes partly from the history of modern political institutions, partly from the social life inculcated by Christianity, and partly from the medieval doctrine of freedom and responsibility. Human equality would be a corollary of equal freedom and responsibility. But there is no greater illusion than the supposition that all persons are born with the same degree of power in regard to their conduct. Men are not equal in their

physical strength, in their intelligence, in their disposition, in their tastes or desires. They are as various in these respects as the leaves of the trees. Hence it is not possible to carry the conclusion drawn from one class of men to another and differently endowed class, whether the conclusion regards necessitarianism or freedomism. I do not mean to say that men are unequal in all respects, but only that they are so generally unequal that we may well ask whether they might not be unequal in regard to freedom. For instance, assume that the imbecile, the insane, and the irreclaimable criminal are not free, it will not follow that the normal and rational man is not free unless we can prove or assume that in the necessary conditions the two are the same in nature. So if we prove that the properly developed man is free it does not follow that the abnormal man is equally so. We see no reason to make freedom an absolutely simple quality incapable of degrees. It is possible to conceive it as existing in all stages of development from pure determinism to absolute freedom. Whether it is so or not, as a fact, probably requires proof or may be left to individual opinion. But on *a priori* grounds, considering the enormous inequalities among men respecting intelligence, feelings, and desires, it is at least probable that differences of will capacity should also exist. Hence it is enough to say that we must not hastily conclude from the presence or absence of freedom in one man or class of men to the same in all others. It may be true that they are all alike in this matter, but this truth cannot be assumed. A valid conclusion must have the same conditions in all cases, and as these vary between blind instincts and the highest intelligence and power there ought to be room for various degrees of freedom or of determinism in volitions. Many of the arguments on both sides have their value modified by this fact and will appear restricted in application on this account, or will require additional reasons than their fitness to special cases in order to secure them universal cogency. With this caution we may proceed to consider the arguments favorable to freedom. These as observed are negative and positive. We shall state

the negative cases first, as eliminating objections, restricting the issue, and clearing our path.

**1st. Negative Arguments.**—The formulation of the negative arguments will involve the farther analysis of elements in the problems which have only been stated incidentally. Moreover, it is hoped that a dogmatic discussion of them may be avoided, because the question is either an open one or the truth may lie somewhere between the two extreme theories. The first criticism of necessitarianism begins with the oldest form of it.

**1. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN MECHANICAL AND IMMANENT CAUSES.**—By a mechanical cause we mean one that acts from without the subject whose action is to be explained. It is illustrated in the movements of physical bodies. A stone falling to the ground, a billiard-ball struck by the cue, a cannon-ball impelled by powder, the motion of an instrument by the arm, are all instances of mechanical causes. But an immanent cause is one which originates with the subject alone. It is internal or subjective as opposed to external or objective causation. Thus all my conscious activities or volitions are the effect of myself and not of external objects. The distinction here made is designed to admit the fact that all volitions are caused and yet are not subject to the law of mechanical necessity, which would have to be the case were freedom impossible from the point of view of causation. The argument against free will from the position of universal causation assumes that freedom means causeless volition. But when we admit that volition must have a cause and distinguish between mechanical and immanent causes referring free action to the latter, appeal to the law of causation no longer avails to disprove freedom. This ought to be apparent to every one. In fact, freedom has always meant free agency, and free agency is free causation, a form of thought which no one has conceived as opposed to any doctrine of cause except mechanical causes. A free agent or cause is one in which the power resides to originate an effect, and hence the doctrine of free will in its definition and conception does not stand opposed to that of universal causation; it

opposes none but the notion of external causes or necessity. It may be a fact that no such power of free agency or spontaneity exists, but it is no disproof of it to appeal to universal causation. This appeal can establish nothing except that volitions are caused, but not that they are mechanically necessitated. Hence the reference to the universal law of cause and effect either begs the question by assuming that the only law of causation is a mechanical one, or it places its reliance upon an equivocation. Subjective causation conceives the whole problem in perfect consistency with freedom and the caused nature of volitions at the same time.

However, it should be observed that this doctrine of subjective determinism, though it removes the objection from the general law of cause and effect, does not prove the freedom of *voleity* or the possibility of alternative choice. It is not relevant to that issue, except that it will be a preliminary step to it. It can prove nothing but *spontaneity*. Subjective determinism or exemption from mechanical causes may not go any farther than spontaneous or automatic actions. But this at least must be true in order to condition any farther power of volition, and when it is proved, we have not only a doctrine which puts decided limitations upon that of mechanical necessity, but also a position which removes all *a priori* objections to freedom in the true sense. If one exception to mechanical causes in originating an event be found, there is nothing in the nature of things to render the supposition of another exception unreasonable. At the same time, we must admit that the argument here does not prove anything more than the freedom of spontaneity.

It is proper to call attention here to the several meanings of the term cause as affecting the question. This term is sometimes used in a generic and sometimes in a specific sense. It is the confusion between these two meanings which constitutes both the plausibility and the weakness of the determinist theory as usually understood. In its general sense cause denotes any antecedent whatever which may be regarded as the producer of

events. But specifically it has three different conceptions attached to it: (a) An antecedent *event* or *phenomenon* which conditions another event. For instance, the motion of a tree caused by the wind, which in turn is caused by something else; the sound of a falling stone which has been put into motion by some other agency; the loss of property by a conflagration which is caused by some other event. Here cause means the immediate antecedent event which produces or necessitates the succeeding one. (b) An *object, being, or force* which produces an effect either of itself or mediately through other agencies. For example, the sun as a cause of heat, soil as the cause of growth, animals as the cause of their actions, in all of which cases the immediate cause is not conceived as an event determined or brought into existence by another immediate event. The subjects have a certain amount of relative permanence. (c) The *sum of all the conditions*, whether events or things, or both combined, that are necessary to the production of an effect. For example, organization as a cause of growth, comprising various kinds of matter, a specific temperature, capacity of assimilation, etc. Again, the various complementary conditions which produce sound, as the existence of two bodies with sonorous properties, their impact, the action of one and the reaction of the other, etc. In fact, all phenomena are probably complicated with complex conditions of this kind.

But it is only the first of these conceptions that can be opposed to freedom in any sense of the term, and this is identical with the notion of mechanical cause, which is conceived either as one event producing another, or as one external force determining the action of another. It is even open to serious question whether this is a true conception of a cause at all.\* But we shall not quarrel with usage. It is sufficient to say that no freedomist in admitting the causation of volitions conceives it as merely the production of one event by another, except perhaps those who speak of the motive as the cause. At any rate

\* *Philosophical Review*, Vol. III., pp. 1-13. Article: *Kant's Third Antinomy*.

cause used in the second sense is perfectly compatible with freedom, though it does not establish anything more than the freedom of spontaneity.

2. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE FREEDOM OF VOLITIONS AND THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL.—We constantly speak of our *acts* as free as if they were such in the same sense that the will is free. But, strictly speaking, this is not the case. A volition is an event, and as such is *necessitated* by an antecedent. That is to say, given the antecedent the volition *must* take place, and hence the necessity would seem to contradict its freedom. But the fact is, such freedom as volitions may be said to have, is a derived or a borrowed freedom, reflected merely from the freedom of the agent of whom they are the acts. This is the reason that we can admit that all acts of will are “caused,” and as acts come from a cause external to themselves, but it is not “caused;” that is, produced or brought into existence at the time, by some other event or thing. The will is more or less permanent, as the subject of volitions and is a cause of them, as an antecedent which can originate them, though they are caused without any ability to originate themselves. We speak of their freedom only in the sense that they can be prevented by the subject, who is not absolutely conditioned by any antecedent event at the time.

This distinction between free acts and free will must be kept clear under all circumstances, since it enables us, if we like, to admit determinism or necessitarianism of any kind we choose in regard to volition, while denying it of the will. A volition is an act, an event, a phenomenon, having a beginning in time and originated by something else than itself, and so may be necessitated to that extent. The will is not an event, act, or phenomenon having its beginning immediately antecedent to the volition. It is simply the subject or agent of the volition. It is not necessary to regard it as a separate faculty of the mind, as probably some psychologists have conceived it. It may be considered as the name of the whole mind in a certain relation, or exercising a certain function, namely, that of choice and volition. Hence

it is the subject of actions which it causes in itself. Now, it will be free when it acts independently of external forces, while a volition, as such, cannot be free in the sense of spontaneously occurring, or of spontaneously originating any other event. This analysis explains the paradox we have already remarked in the philosophy of Kant. It will be remembered that he said the will as a phenomenon is determined, but as a noumenon or thing in itself, is free. Translated into common language this is only to say that volition, the will as a phenomenon, is caused by something external to itself, but that the will as subject, as a noumenon or thing in itself, is not caused or determined; that is, created at the time that it produces a volition. It is a free cause in the sense that it spontaneously originates something, even though the occasion for it is some external stimulus. The external influence may make it necessary to act, or perhaps prudent to do so, but it does not determine what the act shall be or the direction of it. This is an original spontaneity of the mind.

3. THE UNIFORMITY AND PREDICTABILITY OF EVENTS IS NOT A PROOF OF THEIR NECESSITY.—The plausibility of the argument for necessitarianism here criticised is derived wholly from its comparison with the uniformity of nature where necessity is unquestioned. But the comparison is illusory. It is not the mere fact of uniformity in nature that proves the necessity of the events so caused, but it is the nature of the causes operating. Our conception of a physical cause is that of an unconscious force incapable of choosing between alternatives, and hence we can conceive only one effect possible in the case. Consequently, when we observe what is evidently the effect of mechanical forces, whether uniform or not, we adjudge it as necessary. But its uniformity does not determine the nature of its cause. Physical forces must produce uniform effects, but uniformity is not a proof of necessity. This is to say, that necessary agencies are uniform, but uniform agencies are not convertible with the necessary. Uniform actions may exist without being necessary in any sense that there could be no alternative to them.

It is true, however, that it is natural to infer necessary where

we observe uniform connection. In fact, uniformity is, in the last analysis of our knowledge, the evidence upon which we depend for our belief in necessary connection. We probably learn that matter acts through necessary causes from our observation of the fact of uniformity in its conduct. But we must remember that the inference drawn from uniform to necessary connection is only an inductive one and at most cannot go beyond a probability. But it is not demonstrative proof of necessity; and as long as it is not this, it is open to conceive some other than a necessary agent as the cause of the phenomenon. Hence human volitions might be ever so uniform, as in rational beings they would be, without entitling us to suppose that they were necessitated. The only necessity that is opposed to freedom is the necessity of physical causation, which does not deliberate, and is not conscious either of the end to which it moves or of any possible alternative. But the will itself, not being necessitated at the time of its action, prevents the act from being necessary, however uniform it may be.

If asked, what then is the evidence of free will, we can only say that we are not yet required to state this. Our present duty is fulfilled if we show that uniform action does not exclude freedom, so that reference to habit, uniformity of conduct, as in suicide, illegitimacy, etc., and predictability of human conduct, as proving necessitarianism, can be repudiated as a *petitio principii*. It is sufficient for the present to maintain a verdict of "not proven" against that theory.

4. THE RELATION OF MOTIVES TO VOLITION AND TO THE WILL.—The argument against freedom from the prevalence of the strongest motive derives its plausibility and strength from two facts: first, from the old beliefs that motives are the causes of volition, and second, from their comparison in this formula with the resultant of physical forces. If two forces compete with each other, the stronger must prevail and determines what the effect shall be. Hence, if two motives offer different attractions to the will, it is very natural to resort to the comparison with conflicting physical forces in order to explain the



effect. But the comparison, though a very happy one for its purposes, is wholly an illusory one in regard to the central question at issue. It wholly mistakes the nature of a motive and its relation to volition. A careful examination of these facts will modify the argument based upon the analogy to which reference has been made.

In the first place, however, it is open to the freedomist to question the strict propriety of the expression "strongest motive," as at once calculated to lead the mind astray. In so far as motives are ideas of ends, we do not see how the attribute of "strength" can be ascribed to them at all. Ideas are not distinguished by degrees of strength as forces are. The term applies to them only in a metaphorical sense. Then, in so far as motives are desires they are more properly distinguished by *preferences* than by strength, so that again the term is metaphorical and misleads us by a false comparison with physical forces. But the convenience of the expression and the fixity of it in established usage is such that it is not easy to dislodge it, and it is not necessary to do so as long as we can eliminate its influence by showing the mistaken assumptions at the basis of it. Hence we may admit, so far as the argument is concerned, that the strongest motive will always prevail when we mean only that the consciousness of a preferred interest or duty will determine, that is, decide the volition. We can then criticise the doctrine assumed in it.

We said that necessitarians, in so far as they rely upon the idea that the strongest motive must determine volition, assume, either consciously or unconsciously, that motives are causes of volition. The tendency to this assumption is inherited from that period when they were regarded in no other light, and when even instincts could be considered as "motives." The very term is drawn from mechanical science and carries with it mechanical associations. In mechanics "motive" is a force which impels machinery, and so is an antecedent cause of motion. Thus steam, gas, water, electricity are "motives" or "motive" forces, though recent usage, for the sake of avoiding the practice

of the moral sciences, where the term implies purpose as well, inclines to adopt the phrase *motor forces* instead. Hence in the physical sciences "motives" are causes. But in moral science the term expresses, as already defined, first an idea of an end, in which there is no causal force whatever, and second an element of desire which expresses an order of *preference* rather than of force or cause, though it is unquestionably very intimately related to volition. But the question whether it is the cause of it in any sense whatever depends, in the last analysis, upon the farther question whether the volition can be distinguished in all instances from the motive. The term "volition" is, after all, an ambiguous one. It sometimes denotes the muscular movement of the body immediately initiated by the will; again it more frequently denotes the executive or determining act which results in a muscular movement. This is the conception of it which distinguishes it from choice, which is also an act of will, and is a volition, though it is not an executive volition. An executive volition is merely the act of will which mediates between an internal decision and the external act necessary to realize it, but it is not the only act of the will which involves the question of freedom or which can be called voluntary. In this respect the choice is also a volition: it is a voluntary determination between two alternatives and employs the whole function of the will as a free and moral agent. The executive act is responsible only for the objective result, not for the choice which determines the character of the agent. Now, it is interesting to observe that *no one ever speaks of the motive as determining or causing the choice*. We speak of the *reason* for a choice, or of the preference which it indicates, but not of anything that would imply a dynamic power on the part of the "motive" to produce the choice, and yet it is an act of the will requiring as much of a "motive" cause, if such is ever required, as a volition is supposed to have. The whole question of freedom must be decided, not merely by concluding whether a man can perform this or that volition or not, but also by settling whether he can *choose* or not. If he is not free he cannot

choose, but if he can choose between alternatives, the farther question is whether the motive is the *efficient* or dynamic rather than the *final* cause of the choice. The former, however, no one seems inclined to assert. Unless the condition of choice be dynamic or efficient there is no ground for laying any stress upon the strongest motive, simply because the whole problem of freedom has to be decided before we reach the phenomenon of executive volition. But as we seem only to have *reasons*, not motives, for choice, the only question is whether desire, which is one of the two fundamental elements of motives, *must* issue in volition before a choice can be made. If it must, the argument would be stronger against freedom; if not, as is generally, if not always, the case, the argument is altogether in favor of freedom.

Again, there is another way of considering the relation of the two facts. Assuming that motives are antecedents and volitions consequents, we see that there may be the same uniform order and relation between them that in nature generally gives rise to the supposition that the antecedent is the cause; and as the motive can in no manner be eliminated from rational actions the notion that they are causes seems to be very strong. But there is an illusion here, due, first to a merely accidental resemblance between this series of events and those in nature where the inference from antecedent to cause is justifiable, though we must remember that it does not carry with it its own proof; and in the second place, to disregarding the relation between the mind and its motives and volitions. It is a very important fact in this discussion that the motive is as much the product of the mind as is the volition. They are both phenomena or functions of the same subject, so that it is at least difficult to see how one can possibly be the cause of the other. If the motive were some event apart from the mind and produced the volition, the supposition of its causal character would be a much more tenable one. But so far from this being the case, the motive is always a product of the mind, and so also is the volition, the two being only in the position of invariable concomitants. If the motive is to be the cause we must suppose that it acts on the mind after the

mind has produced it itself, and that somehow the volition must be the product of the mind or will and the effect of the motive at the same time. The fact is, that the mind is the cause of both phenomena, rather than one of them being the cause of the other. Now, as the motive is the product of the mind and not of external stimulus—that is, the whole nature and content of the motive is the creation of the mind—there must at least be the freedom of spontaneity in originating this phenomenon itself, at least its force and character, if not the reason for its occurrence, so that there is still a way open for deliberation as between the rise of desire and the occurrence of volition, which, as we have seen, is the direct product of the will, and this deliberation cuts off the chance of a causal nexus between the motive and the volition. Consequently when the mind deliberates between a desire and a volition the motive cannot be a cause, and if it is not *always* a cause, there is no reason to suppose that it is at any time of the nature of a causal influence, but only an index of the mind's nature and a concomitant of its volitions. Moreover, it is possible to contend that the motive or desire is always the same and has the same ultimate end in view with a given individual, while it is the means to this end which vary and present alternatives. Consequently if the motive be the same and is the cause of the choice and volition, these latter should always be the same. But they are different, so that some other power has to be invoked to account for the result than the causal influence of the motive. The causal agency of the mind and will in the production of both events alike is this power, and it is neither created by the motive nor determined causally in its action by anything except its own nature, and that is all that the doctrine of freedom asks for. The nature of a thing can just as well be free as it can be anything else. Of course, it may require to be proved by better evidence than its *a priori* possibility, and this may be forthcoming in the positive arguments. But for the present it suffices to note that the argument from the influence of stronger motives does not stand in the way of the supposition of freedom, because

the conception of the causality of motives, lurking at the basis of it, is an illusion; at least, any such causality as supposes a direct dynamic effect on volition without supposing the intermediate free agency of the mind or will.

5. THE EQUIVOCAL NATURE OF THE ARGUMENT FROM CHARACTER.—The generally admitted supposition that a man will act according to his character gets its force wholly from an illusion created partly by an equivocation in the term "character" and partly by assuming the whole question in supposing that the "character" of the mind is necessarily fixed in the same sense as that of material objects. Now, the term "character" can mean only two things apart from its etymological import, which is that of a sign or mark by which a thing may be identified. First, it may denote *the uniformity of my actions and purposes*, and second, *the nature of my being* as expressed in actions. In the first of these meanings it is apparent that character is only a name for the way in which I *do* act, not the name for a cause of my action, or for the way I *must* act. In fact moral character, ever since Aristotle, has expressed what the will produces itself, not what either produces the will or causes volition. The will gives rise to "character" in the first sense, so that even if it be regarded as the cause of the volition, the freedom of the will would not be interfered with by this relation. But being only a name for the uniformity of actual volition, while it is regarded as the product of the will, it can in no sense be said to determine volition, but rather perhaps to be produced by it.

The second meaning of the term to express the fixed nature of the subject, as evidenced by the uniformity of volition, is much more forcible in the case. We are in the habit of saying and thinking that matter must act according to its nature and that it cannot act otherwise, these modes of expression being taken as identical with the necessity of its actions. Hence, when we apply the same formula to the mind we carry with it the same implication. But while it might be true that the mind *must* act according to its nature, that "nature" might be free, and it may be begging the question to assume that it is like material objects

in this respect. Freedom could be as much a part of the nature or "character" of a subject as necessity, so that the mere term does not carry with it any necessary limitations upon mental capacity. Moreover, we may ask whether a free agent could be supposed to act in any other way than according to his "character" or nature. If the necessity of acting according to one's nature is opposed to freedom, then to be free one must *not* act according to his nature. Now, in the first place, while not acting according to one's nature might *prove* that our nature did not coerce us, this condition is not necessary to the case. The proof of freedom is not a necessary condition of its existence. It may exist under conditions that betray no evidence of it. Of course, we require proof of it before asserting it, but the absence of that specific proof does not justify us in denying the fact of freedom which may exist independently of the proof of it. But in the second place, not to press the first case, if a free agent does not act according to his nature it must be either because he acts according to the nature of something else or because his own nature counts for nothing in the effect. Under the first of these two conditions he certainly would not be free (objective determinism). But every one admits that a man is the cause of his own volitions, otherwise they are not volitions at all, and hence no one believes that, when he causes his own volitions, he acts according to any other nature than his own. On the other hand, if to be free a man's nature must count for nothing in his actions, then it follows either that a free nature could not conceivably be the cause of its own actions, or that no nature at all is required to bring about a volition, or that man does not and cannot act at all. Every one of these suppositions are so manifestly absurd, so contrary to fact and conception, that we can only believe that action according to one's nature, and the necessity of such action, does not stand in the way of freedom, because for aught that we know that nature may be free.

Why, then, do we feel the force of the argument against freedom when we see the limitations of character asserted? We unquestionably commiserate, and to some extent excuse, the con-

firmed drunkard for his habits, the habitual criminal for his temptations, and the passionate man for his explosions of feeling and passion. It would seem that nature and character do impose limitations upon choice in spite of the apparent conclusiveness of the criticism we have just advanced. But here is where the illusion arises from the two meanings of the term. There are two opposite propositions which can be affirmed and both of which can be true at the same time, when allowance is made for the equivocation of one of their terms. Thus if "character" expresses the nature of the subject, then the necessity of acting according to that nature is not opposed to freedom, and we should not expect the subject to act otherwise or to be able to act otherwise. On the other hand, if "character" expresses nothing but one's actual habits, the necessity of action according to those would limit freedom. But we expect men, at least, to be able to act otherwise than they actually do, because we conceive that it is *they* and not their habits ("character") that are the cause of their volitions. That is to say, a man can act otherwise than according to his actual habits, though he cannot act otherwise than his nature determines. The former condition proves his freedom and the latter does not oppose it. The only action determined by character which would not be free is that which would be caused by habits. But as no one even suspects this condition of things there is no excuse for the argument except the illusion produced by the equivocal meaning of "character."

6. THE LIMITATIONS OF HEREDITY.—The argument against freedom from the fact of heredity is by far the strongest one to which the necessitarian can appeal. We certainly feel that inherited tendencies place limitations upon what we can expect of the individual who is affected by them. Hereditary tendencies to drink, to commit crime, to practice vice, to lead a life of idleness and poverty, or to act in any other particular way, are certainly handicapping qualities in the struggle for existence which seem to condemn the individual to a course that is not only opposed to his interests, but also appears beyond his reach and our

expectations of his capacity to realize, while the inheritance of the opposite qualities makes the individual quite as much of an automaton, and insures that his virtues shall be too natural to deserve the credit of those which accompany a struggle and involve freedom. Hence we are not disposed to slur over this argument. But it is proper to define its limitations, and possibly to show that it circumscribes responsibility more than it does freedom.

In the first place, the strength of the argument lies in its combination of that from the causal nature of motives and of that from the necessity of acting in accordance with one's character, and adds to it the notion that the specific tendency is not due to the habits or will of the individual subject. This makes the argument from heredity rather striking. But there is a qualification which weakens it somewhat when we return to the previous discussions, where we attempted to show that motives are not causes and that action according to one's nature is not necessarily opposed to freedom. It all depends on what that nature is. These opinions need not be restated. It is enough to limit the argument from heredity by showing the doubtful character of its assumptions. But there are at least two other facts bearing upon its inconclusiveness. The first is that the general doctrine and conception of heredity does not hinder us from supposing that freedom itself might be inherited. Grant that some persons are not free, owing to inherited disposition in special directions, could not some inherit that balanced nature which freedom is supposed to imply? As for myself, I see nothing in the mere fact of heredity to oppose it to freedom, but it must show tendencies which are as fixed and as uncontrollable as blind instincts in order to wholly dislodge freedom. The second fact is more important, and it grows out of the last remark. Heredity, in cases even of the worst kind, does not show impulses or tendencies that are absolutely unmodifiable by the individual. Even the so-called blind instincts are often variable with environment. Hereditary deviations from normal life do not, perhaps, in any cases show absolute inadjustability to environment or to condi-



tions that affect the personal welfare of the subject. If they did show this, if they represented an absolutely fixed impulse or instinct that could not regulate the time or place of its gratification, we might talk about the want of freedom. But this is, perhaps, never the case. Hereditary criminal and vicious tendencies are often accompanied by as much deliberation, calmness, and judicious selection of opportune times and places as the sanest minds would exhibit, and this only proves that their inclinations are not wholly uncontrollable. No doubt their strong temptations and the handicapping influence of persistent desires against the will are palliating circumstances when we come to take account of their responsibilities and the need of an environment which might offer competing motives with those that are predominant. But they are not a disproof of the agent's freedom, because *if the external environment be made sufficiently pressing at the right point hereditary inclinations will almost invariably yield to it, which could never be the case if the agent had no capacity for this adjustment.* This is only to say that the retention of the capacity for conscious adjustment to environment on the part of those who are burdened with specific hereditary tendencies, disturbing the balance of sane and healthy functions, is all that is necessary for the possession of at least a measure of freedom. Moreover, granting that some are not so qualified, we cannot argue from the exceptional and abnormal case to the normal, because it may be that freedom is the very distinction between them. The argument from heredity, therefore, has very decided limitations.

7. ENVIRONMENT LIMITS RESPONSIBILITY AND NOT FREEDOM.—Very little needs to be said in order to dislodge the argument from environment against freedom. The doctrine of heredity derives its force from the fact that it refers wholly to influences *within* the nature of the individual. But environment is wholly an external medium and the argument from it must be confined to objective determinism, which no one admits. Environment does undoubtedly impose decided limitations upon our liberty, or physico-political freedom as defined,

and therefore limits responsibility, but it does not determine volitions. If we adjust ourselves to it, the act represents our choice of the prudent rather than the imprudent, but not a loss of freedom. The determinist here imagines that in order to be free we should be able to choose either alternative with impunity, but in assuming this he has the physico-political conception of freedom, that is, liberty, in view, and not velleity or the capacity of alternative choice, which is the question at issue. It is true that the subject has not the former capacity, but he can choose either to adjust himself to environment, or to overcome it, and this establishes his velleity so far as external influences are concerned. But his responsibility is very much modified.

#### 8. THE CONFUSION OF PRESCIENCE AND PREDESTINATION.

—We shall not, in a treatise of Ethics, examine the merits and demerits of the theological questions growing out of the doctrine of predestination. But apart from those its relation to freedom may be briefly discussed. If volitions are absolutely predestined there can be no doubt that the will is not free, because predestination of this kind is fatalism pure and simple. But mere prescience of them is not opposed to freedom. It is merely foreknowledge of what will take place, not the causation of it. But to fix the occurrence of an event beyond any prevention whatever is to destroy the freedom of any agent connected with it, because such an agent would be the mere instrument or medium, not the original cause of the event, which he should be in order to have any form of freedom whatever. However, the theological doctrine of predestination does not always take this form, and it may be seriously questioned whether, when it does, it has any canonic authority for its view of predestined volitions. With St. Paul predestination most probably was limited to the fixing beforehand of man's salvation, or lot hereafter, conditioned on a foreknowledge of what he would do. This is not the predestination of his volitions, but only of the consequences of foreknown volitions, which is a very different thing.

**2d. Positive Arguments.**—The negative arguments were said merely to modify or remove the difficulties involved in the objections to freedom, and now we come to such arguments as create more positive support for the doctrine. Like the others they have their limitations. They do not mean to prove, where they are supposed to prove anything at all, that all persons are free, or equally free, but only that where certain conditions are fulfilled freedom can fairly be entitled to exist. There may be many exceptions. But if any genuine cases of freedom exist, we have a basis for a rational system of Ethics and practical principles for the territory covered by those conditions. Nor do they all apply to the same kind of freedom, as will be remarked when discussing them.

**1. THE PRIORITY OF FREE TO NECESSARY CAUSATION.**—The law of causation is supposed to imply necessity of some kind, and so it does; but is only the necessity of the effect, *not the necessity of the cause*. It is the effect which must occur if the causes act, but there is no reason in that fact for supposing that the cause *must* act also. If there be any necessity about the action of the cause in the case it will be for the reason that it too is an effect of some antecedent cause, and not because it is an efficient agency. The necessity is thus purely relative to the effect. Let us illustrate. If a stone fall upon a hard surface it will very certainly make a noise and probably produce some additional effects. These *must* occur, the conditions being what they are; there is no alternative to them. They are the necessary consequence of the stone's falling. But there is nothing implied in this fact to the effect that the stone must have fallen. The necessity of the effect of its fall, once it is set in motion, does not prove the necessity of its falling. This may have its cause, of course; but we should not seek for it if we did not know that the fall was an event, an effect, which had its beginning. Its necessity depends wholly upon its being an effect. But perhaps the illustration will appear more forcible if we put it in another form. If I strike the table the effect will at least be a noise. This is a necessary consequence of my

act. But would any one suspect the necessity of my act other than its being the effect of my will?

All this indicates that "necessity" does not express any absolute form of action or condition, but only the relative fixity of events when their causes once act. There must be some original efficiency which is not an effect in order to get events into existence at all, so that necessary phenomena are subsequent to something that is not necessary. In this way we indicate that the law of mechanical causation is not the most universal law of causal agency, for the reason that it is limited to the necessary occurrence of the effect and does not apply to the action of antecedents, unless they too are effects. But it can never apply to causes that are not effects or events. Free or spontaneous causation, therefore, must be prior to any other kind as a condition of its existence. This can be shown in the following manner:

We must suppose a beginning in time for all events or phenomena. They are not events unless they have such an origin, and it is on the ground of a beginning in time that we look for a cause of events. Now, this cause must be either an antecedent event or something which is not an event. There can be no third alternative. If an event is caused by an antecedent event, there must be a series of such events, and this series must be either finite or infinite. If the series be finite it has a beginning in time, and the first event of the series would either not be caused at all, in which case it would have a free or non-necessitated origin, or its cause would not be an antecedent event, but something else than an event, and in this case would be necessitated neither in its existence nor its action. On the other hand, if the series is infinite it has no beginning in time and there is neither a first event in the series nor an antecedent event to the series to be its cause. An infinite series, therefore, cannot have an event in time for its cause, but must be conditioned by something which is not an event. We say nothing about the impossibility of an infinite series composed of finite units. This may be assumed as a vantage ground to prove that the series must be finite, and so ultimately caused by something outside of it

and not determined by an event. But we can admit, for the sake of an argument at least, that an infinite series of events is possible; but it is possible only on the supposition that the cause of the series is not an event, because there can be no antecedent to that which has no beginning in time. Hence the series, whether finite or infinite, cannot have an event for its cause. That is to say, the cause must be that which is itself not caused, and so must be free or spontaneous in its action. On the other hand, if the cause be that which is not an event it cannot be subject to the law of mechanical causation, which would make it dependent upon an antecedent, which it is not in the terms of the conclusion just reached. If it acts at all, therefore, it acts spontaneously, if not, there will be no event to account for. But all agree that events or phenomena are admitted facts. They are either caused or not caused. If caused, they ultimately depend, as the previous argument shows, upon that which is not caused, but free or spontaneous. If not caused they are free again, or cases of spontaneous generation, and there is no need to admit any doctrine of causation whatever. Everything—that is, all events—would be free and not necessitated; no antecedent and no agent would cause or necessitate them, and we should have spontaneity at the expense of the very law of causation which is supposed to nullify the claims of freedom. But since the self-origination of events without a subject or ground of them is either absurd or opposed to science we are left to suppose them caused with the consequence previously proved; that ultimately the cause must be something which is not an event, and which will not itself be caused unless it shows the marks of an effect or event; which only puts the absolute one step further back. And this absolute and spontaneous cause must be found either because the finite series must be originated by that which is not an event or because an infinite series can have no antecedent. This, of course, results in the conclusion that a true cause is not an antecedent or transcendental thing or phenomenon, but a subject which is contemporaneous with the act or immanent in it.

It is apparent from this argument that necessity is only a property of *events*, not of their causes, except that we apply cause in an equivocal sense to denote an antecedent conditioning the effect. But taken as the agent which acts, the cause is not necessitated, as is an event which that cause produces. If it act at all it must be as an originating cause, and hence the notion of freedom has both the logical and the natural priority to necessity. That is to say, as a property of existence it is prior to necessity, so that every theory of necessitarianism must be of the relative and wholly subordinate to freedom which conditions it. It must be remarked, however, that the freedom established by the argument is not the freedom of *velleity*, but only of *spontaneity*. The whole force of the argument will be lost if we suppose that it can prove the capacity for alternative choice. It does nothing of the kind, and cannot be claimed to prove more than spontaneity, and those who rely upon it to make out the case against determinism or necessitarianism of every form are following a will o' the wisp; for the necessitarianism which is generally maintained only opposes velleity, and may be absolutely identical with the notion of spontaneity as revealed in psycho-dynamic and instinctive actions, supposing that the latter are not reflexes, but automatic. The real and most important issue, as we have already indicated, regards velleity or the capacity of alternative choice.

But if this argument does not prove the one point desirable, it removes all *a priori* objections to freedom from the standpoint of the law of causation. It is the universality of the law of causation, or rather the presumed universality of it, and conceived mechanically at that, which creates the main difficulty with freedom in most minds. But when we show, on the one hand, that mechanical causation cannot be universal, that we are obliged ultimately to accept spontaneity or free agency of that kind as prior to necessity, and on the other, that causation by antecedent events is not the true or only conception of cause, we have proved at least one exception to the principle invoked by physical science, and nothing after that exists in the principle to prevent us from adding the

capacity of alternative choice to the idea of a first cause; that is, adding velleity to spontaneity, if only there be evidence forthcoming that it is a fact as well as a possibility. Moreover, the advantage of proving spontaneity in this way is, that it is not conditioned upon a spiritualistic or idealistic view of things. It is perfectly compatible with the materialistic theory of the universe: in fact, must be assumed by that theory as a condition of its own account of phenomena. Materialism and mechanism, therefore, cannot stand out against first causes. Whether they are consistent with alternative choice or not must be determined by the question whether matter is conscious or not. Its *a priori* power, however, against freedom is thoroughly eviscerated by the necessity of its assuming spontaneity and surrendering the absolute universality of mechanical causation. With this conclusion we may turn to the evidence for freedom as the capacity for alternative choice, although the next argument has a bearing upon both kinds of psychological freedom.

2. THE FACT OF DELIBERATION.—Ever since the time of Aristotle the fact of deliberative actions has played an important rôle in the problem of freedom. It has, in fact, been made essential to real freedom, for the reason that, on the one hand, it is contrasted with impulse which seems to represent the type of reflex actions, and presumably not free, and on the other hand, it seems to imply that equilibrium between motives which the indeterminist conceived as essential to freedom. It is easy to see why deliberation should be a forcible fact in the case, because if a volition is the effect of a "motive," it should follow immediately upon the occurrence of the motive. But if there is deliberation between "motives," they do not seem to have causal power to initiate the volition until a prior causal power directs them, and this would be the deliberating subject. It was natural, therefore, when the conception of mechanical causation dominated the age in which resort was made to hesitation between alternatives, that this idea of deliberation should present an exception to that way of viewing the connection of events. Whether the argument is conclusive or not we have yet to examine. In the mean-

time we have two things to accomplish: first, to define what is meant by deliberation, and second, to examine the various kinds of human actions which are concerned in the problem. We can then take up the importance of deliberation as a factor in conduct. We may as well remark also that its force is not the same in regard to all kinds of freedom. It may prove only subjective determinism in the broad sense, or merely spontaneity. For this reason we shall divide its functions into two kinds, and so consider its relation to spontaneity apart from its relation to velleity. In connection with the power of deliberation will also come up the question regarding the function of inhibition or arrest in mental phenomena, as an agency in the development from organic and reflex activities to the rational.

(a) *Definition of Deliberation.*—Deliberation, so far as it concerns Ethics, is reflection upon alternative courses of action offered to the will. In general it is reflection about any object of consciousness or delayed attention to it. In matters of conduct it is hesitation about a choice or a volition, and involves a suspension of action until the mind can come to some conclusion about the proper course to be chosen. Thus if I am in a room alone where a tempting plate of delicious fruit is exposed to my eyes, if hungry and if the fruit were my own I might at once help myself to it without any hesitation and perhaps without thought of the consequences. But if the fruit be not my own, my first inclination to take it may be arrested by the thought that it is not my own and that I should be doing a wrong to take it. Then I may think that the owner will not care, or that I shall not be discovered, and the temptation returns. But again I am checked by the fear that I may be mistaken again, that I have no right to the fruit, etc. All the while I am simply deliberating about whether I shall or shall not act. Similarly, if I am not decided as to the prudent course among several possible ones offered me, I reflect upon them until I am assured, and I act according to the result of deliberation. All this shows a certain amount of control over the direction of consciousness and the will, and that there may be a delay between the inception of



an idea and the effort to put it into effect. Deliberation thus suspends the impulsive or hasty tendencies of feeling until the more balanced functions of the mind give it control over influences that might make it their victim. Such is its nature, and after examining the various kinds of action represented by development, from the lowest to the highest stages of organization, we may study the function of reflection in its relation to conduct.

(b) *Reflex Actions*.—Reflex action is an unconscious response to stimulus. It is illustrated by such actions as the beating of the heart, the peristaltic movements of the stomach and intestines, and in a partial way, breathing and winking. There are probably numerous other forms, though less manifest types of it. But the few special cases mentioned are sufficient to make clear that they are not consciously caused by the subject in whose person they appear. The resource of explanation is simply to maintain that they are organic reactions to stimulus and are no more free moral acts than is the fall of a stone. Now, as it is generally assumed that both in the lowest types of organic existence and in the earliest stages of all animal life the actions of such beings are only reflex or automatic, the latter being less definite reflexes, we may readily ask the question how we ever get beyond such actions. We are everywhere told that all our higher ideas and actions are developed from the earlier and lower, and if these are only sensations and reflexes we may well ask, considering that reflex actions are neither conscious nor free, how the conduct we call free can possibly be so when it is only a modified and complex form of reflex action. Throwing aside the absence of consciousness in the case, the entire dependence of reflex actions upon external stimulus makes them necessary events under their conditions, and if our volitions are only like them, with a similar kind of condition acting as the antecedent, they are not free. But if our actions be free in any respect and yet must be superimposed upon a basis of reflex functions, how can that result be affected?

(c) *Impulsive Actions*.—As already defined, impulsive actions are non-deliberative volitions, and hence represent a tendency to

act on the temptation of the moment. They differ from reflexes in being conscious, but they resemble the same in the promptness of their occurrence when suggested. They thus have a most important connection with reflexes, at least in appearances. They do not require illustration, after all that has been said of them under the head of motives. But it is important to note that they indicate a condition very unlike freedom to all who feel that deliberation is essential to it; and as so much of man's conduct seems impulsive, it is a question how he ever obtains any control of it, or how he can be expected to gain control of it.

(d) *Rational Actions*.—Rational actions are both conscious and either deliberative or the result of previous deliberation, while involving also right adjustment to either a constant or variable environment. How they are possible in a system based upon reflexes and impulses is the question. They are presumed to be free actions *par excellence*. They are certainly peculiar to the highest stages of development, and are superimposed upon forms of conduct which are not free. How do they originate, and how is free action possible, if evolved from elements containing none of it?

(e) *Inhibition and Its Functions*.—The answer to the several questions which we have asked about the gradual evolution from reflex to rational or deliberative action is found in the part played by the very interesting phenomenon known as inhibition. Before stating its relation to deliberation, which it in reality makes possible, we must show what it is; that is, define it.

Inhibition is *the arrest which the function of one nervous center, or the existence of one set of ideas, exerts upon the spontaneous tendency of another to dominate in action*. This must be illustrated in order to be made more clear. A good example of inhibition is the delay or stoppage of the heart-beat by disturbances in the pneumogastric nerve, or the restraint by the brain of certain muscular movements mediated by the spinal cord; the arrest of intestinal movements by interferences with the splanchnic nerve, and in respiration by interferences with the superior laryngeal nerve. "Similarly," says Foster, "the vaso-motor center in the

medulla may, by impulses arriving along various afferent tracts, be inhibited, during which the muscular walls of various arteries are relaxed or augmented, whereby the tonic contraction of various arteries is increased." This may be called purely physiological arrest. On the other hand, psychological inhibition will be the arresting influence of consciousness in one direction against the exercise either of neural or conscious action in another. For instance, the concentration of attention upon something in the visual field will diminish the intensity of a sensation in the tactual field, or the remembered experience of pain will check the tendency of a present consciousness to issue in muscular action. Attention upon a special object of interest may inhibit the influence of impressions that otherwise would serve as warnings of approaching danger. The effect of past experience will operate to restrain impulse, etc. All these show that the higher organisms are the seat of functions that tend to balance each other, one arresting the unco-ordinated action of another, so that when necessary the central direction of conduct may supplant that of external stimulus and reflex action.

Now, unless we take account of this function of arrest the argument for the originally determined and necessary character of all our actions is very strong. It is generally assumed that man begins his existence as a purely reflex organism which responds to various forms of stimulus. In this condition he can be neither free nor responsible in the proper sense of those terms. To be free the agent must be conscious, must have ideational motives; that is, possess a distinct idea of an end, and have the capacity for deliberation. In reflex actions none of these conditions are present. They are wholly unconscious, non-reflective, and show a dependence upon some stimulus external to the organism or nerve affected. If, therefore, man is purely a reflex organism his freedom is out of the question. He is merely a passive being awaiting the impulse of external stimulus, and for aught we should know in the case his actions would be nothing but the transformation or transmission of energy from without through another medium. They would,

therefore, have to be treated in terms of their external causes. Remove the stimuli and the actions would not occur. There is no spontaneity assumed in reflexes, any more than in the motion of a falling body, and hence if all man's actions were simple reflexes they would be wholly determined from without. There could be no use in treating him as the cause of them, because he would not so act of himself, and could not help thus acting if the stimulus occurred. But it is otherwise if we consider him as the subject of states of consciousness which are assumed to indicate the initiating power of the mind independently of reflex stimulus. States of consciousness may be awakened by external stimuli, but neither their contents nor their power are determined by that source. These are determined by the mind, and are rather mere antecedents and conditions than causes of volition. They represent what we call purpose, ends, motives, which are not apparent in reflexes, and if man be free they must show the initiative of volition to be something other than external stimulus, and that he is capable of deliberating.

Now, man is the subject both of reflex actions and of states of consciousness, which last are supposed to initiate free action. But since all students of his history, both in regard to his individual origin and development from a remote simple organism, maintain that the first functions he exhibits are merely reflex, the question may be raised, as already indicated, How does he ever get beyond them? This is especially significant when we remember the very simple but striking fact that *reflex-reaction time, which is the interval between stimulus and reaction, is shorter than cerebral-reaction time*. That is, reactions of the spinal cord (in sleep, for example) occupy less time than reactions of the higher brain centers, the latter being supposed to exercise the functions of intelligence. Hence this being the case, and if reflex centers must act at once upon the occurrence of stimulus, muscular action must take place before consciousness can either be awakened or influence volition. Consequently whatever consciousness might be able to do after it arose, if left to reflex functions the deed would be done before consciousness arose,

and any volition to the contrary would be nugatory and useless. The same motor organism has to be employed by both forms of action, and if all acts were to follow external stimuli immediately, consciousness could not be their initiative. Hence it must have time to rise and to exercise its efficiency before and independently of the tendencies to reflex action.

It is precisely here that inhibition or arrest, as a function of complex organisms, can be invoked to check the reflexes and to allow conscious states to mediate between stimulus and muscular action. For instance, it has been shown by actual experiment upon animals that the very presence of the cerebral mass of nervous matter acts upon the reflexes of the spinal cord to retard them; that is, to lengthen reaction time. The normal condition, therefore, of a nervous organism, including a brain and a spinal cord, is one of physiological inhibition exerted by the higher centers upon the lower. Again, it is known that in sleep reaction time is quickened, and in the conscious state it is retarded, or intellectual activity diminishes assimilation of food whenever we endeavor to carry on prolonged reflection while the forces of the system are required for digestion. This is a case of psychological inhibition. It represents the arresting power of consciousness upon lower or other centers by virtue of its absorption of energy which would otherwise be expended in the reflex centers. But in whatever manner it may be said to act reaction time is retarded, the energy and promptness of reflex action are diminished, and other forces are called into existence than the mechanico-physical agencies of stimulus and reaction. This effect *might* not be sufficient to overcome or to compensate for the difference between reaction and cerebral events; but on the other hand it often is sufficient, and in highly organized beings is always so for any muscular actions connected with deliberative consciousness. The question, however, is not how consciousness can ever usurp the functions of the organic system, but how it can ever find a chance to exercise motive efficiency, or enable the mind to do so, before some form of muscular response has made its action useless.

Hence the first thing to be accomplished by the facts mentioned is to show the very wide influence exerted by every form of arrest which tends to equilibrate and co-ordinate the reactions of the organism, so that the subject may become more than a merely reacting agent.

The same principle operates when we come to consider the inhibitions of the higher intellectual centers upon the tendencies of sensation and emotion to issue in action immediately upon the occurrence of stimulus. This is the case with the *impulses* or impulsive actions. In a being disposed to follow the temptations of the moment, or to act under sudden passion, the trouble is that his emotions act much like reflexes, and he is the victim of every external circumstance that exposes him to their occurrence. Unless inhibition from some source can check such a tendency, a man seems to be cut off from the possibility of alternative choice for the lack of deliberative resources. He may be conscious, but not conscious of all the consequences involved in the action, prompted by a more or less reflex tonicity of his muscular system at the time. Hence this explosive tendency needs to be curbed, if he should seem to possess anything like freedom. Now we are told by modern psychologists that it is of the very nature of sensational and emotional states to influence the muscular system. Instance suggestion, sudden pains, intense anger or fear, etc. This is the so-called law of *dynamo-genesis*, or the tendency of emotional consciousness to issue in volition, by supposition, without reflection. But it is also a fact that such conditions do not always prevail. The natural tendencies of sensation and emotion are often, if not always, brought under control. Some influence succeeds in arresting their spontaneities. It is, of course, the ideational and reflective consciousness which inhibits them and introduces the rational type of mental action. For instance, pain has an inhibitory influence on muscular action, and so also the idea of a prospective pain will serve as a restraint, not perhaps functionally, but through the will. The child putting its hand unwittingly into the fire is an instance of the effect of present pain. The consequent action is often called reflex ; but I do not

think it is wholly such. Consciousness is too much a part of it to be purely reflex in all cases, if it is ever so. Then if the child be tempted a second time to try the same experiment out of curiosity, the memory of the past experience, or the idea of the past pain, with the consciousness of its imminent reoccurrence, will arrest all tendencies to movement caused by the curiosity of the previous moment. One state of consciousness suppresses the motor tendency of the other in the case, and the subject becomes a deliberative being. In this and all similar cases the natural difference between the occurrence of the stimulus and the reaction, if it were reflex, is overcome, and a balance established between the various functions of the system, so that the higher states of consciousness may take possession of the field and interrupt the natural influence of external forces and the temptation to adjustment without regard to remoter consequences.

The function of inhibition in this is perfectly clear. It is an organic influence to break up the pure mechanism of the system and to enable the higher mental states to supplant the reflex and impulsive tendencies of the subject. When it thus overcomes both forms of influence opposed to free action, the mechanical tendencies of reflex action, and the spontaneity of impulse, it hands the field over to deliberative and rational agencies. It does not constitute freedom, and may not be any element of it in a perfectly developed being. But in all such as are exposed to the limitations of organic reflexes, the temptations of present impulse, and the fixities of hereditary desire, it is a powerful agent for enabling reason to obtain command. It is the function which makes deliberation possible, and shows both the complexity of the conditions of freedom and the graduated character of that attribute. We should remember also that it will operate to make choice deliberative as well as to modify muscular action and volition. It remains, then, only to see how deliberation serves as evidence of the fact.

(f) *Deliberation as a Proof of Spontaneity.*—Inhibition shows that our actions are not simple reflexes, and that they contain

elements which cannot be developed out of reflexes of the unconscious kind. But it does not stand in the way of an immediate connection between external stimulus and volition through the idea which may supplant sensation and emotion of the impulsive sort. To establish the first condition of freedom, then, we must wholly eliminate the determining influence of stimulus, that is, environment. This can be done in the following manner:

If a man's action be in any way determined by environment, that is to say, if volition be the *necessary* consequence of his environment, caused by it, the act must follow immediately the influence of stimulus. The causal nexus between stimulus and volition must not be interrupted or modified by any other cause. The law of mechanical causation requires this immediate connection between antecedent and consequent. There may be an interval between the first and the last number of a series of events so connected, but each effect is the immediate and necessary consequence of its antecedent cause, and the ultimate result follows without any deliberation regarding it or regarding any number of the series. Now, the connection between stimulus and volition must be either an immediate one, without intervening steps, or a series of steps directly connected, if volition is to be necessitated by external influences. Take the first of these alternatives. If I am suddenly pricked with a sharp instrument my movements will be directed to getting rid of the sensation or pain produced by the stimulus. If the volition be the mechanical effect of the stimulus, the movement must follow it at once, as a sound follows immediately upon the impact of two bodies; and nothing could hinder it from doing so but a cause from some other source. There would be no deliberation possible where the connection was immediate. But it is a fact that the subject does sometimes deliberate in such emergencies. The sensation and the stimulus do not always issue at once in a volition designed to remove them. The agent may permit the stimulus to continue without a volition for self-defense at all, so that the natural and presumptive effect does not occur at all. What this deliberation shows, then, is that the supposed mechanical



nexus between stimulus and volition is interrupted and that we must look to something else than the antecedent stimulus for the true cause of the volition. Where the nexus was uninterrupted there would be no direct objective evidence that any other cause existed, though it might be present. But when an interval of time exists, involving deliberation, between stimulus and volition, supposing them the only two members of the series in which we are interested, it is decided proof that the stimulus is not the only or true cause of the result.

On the other hand, if there are more members than two in the series, and as a fact there are several, which may be summed up in stimulus, sensation, perception, desire, volition, it might be said that an interval could be involved here while the whole series represented a mechanical one in which each member was the necessary effect of its antecedent and the necessary cause of its consequent. But if this view of it be taken there could be no deliberation between any two links in the chain, while each event would be supposed immediately to produce the following. But it is a fact that we do deliberate between either the stimulus and the volition or between desire and volition, and in either case the mechanical nexus of external influences with the final effect is cut off and we have to look to the subject of volition for the true cause of it. As long as deliberation is a fact, therefore, objective determinism must be denied. In other words, the objective determinist is in a dilemma. If he reduces all causation to the purely mechanical form he must deny the fact of deliberation, because the law of cause and effect requires an immediate nexus between the two terms. On the other hand, if he admit the fact of deliberation, he must surrender his theory, because he assumes that the nexus between the presumed cause and its effect is not an immediate one, so that some other agent must be invoked to account for the result. Consequently, as no one has the foolhardiness to deny the fact of deliberation, the theory of objective determinism or mechanical necessitarianism is thrown out of court, and at least the freedom of spontaneity proved beyond a doubt. This

wholly removes the time-honored argument from environment against freedom in the second and third senses of the term, and shows that we must go to the subject for the cause of volition, and if the theory of mechanical necessity is thus proved to be insufficient to account for the effect, at least spontaneity of some kind must be assumed, and this fact removes all *a priori* objections to freedom of a more important kind by implying, first, that mechanical causation is not universal, and second, that there may be possibly two exceptions to it as well as one.

But as there is practically no dispute about the fact that a man is the cause of his own volitions, and that they are not strictly determined objectively, it is not enough to disprove mechanical necessitarianism. Yet there is one important point gained by it, and it is that we have found the evidential significance of deliberation while establishing at least the freedom of spontaneity. The possibility of velleity from the same fact has still to be considered.

(g) *Deliberation as Evidence of Velleity.*—Though deliberation may disprove a causal nexus between external stimulus and volition, it will be said that it does not interfere with the final prevalence of the strongest motive or of character, and hence does not stand in the way of denying the possibility of alternative choice. That is to say, the necessitarian will admit both the fact of deliberation and the falsity of objective determinism, and yet deny the capacity for alternative choice, holding that deliberation does not interfere with this limitation, that the strongest motive must finally prevail in spite of deliberation, which only delays the issue.

The force of this position lies in the fact that motives, properly conceived, are purely subjective events, and yet are used in the argument as if they were objective and did not involve the subject at the same time. In other words, the argument is supposed to carry with it no other implication than is involved in the conception of mechanical "motives," and being stated in the same form creates an illusion of the identity between subjective and objective determinism, for the explanation of

which we have only to refer to what has already been said about the import and causal efficiency of motives. For understanding the relation of deliberation to their causative power we can examine the following, where argument from reflection shows much the same evidential character for velleity as it has shown for spontaneity.

The force of the denial that deliberation alters the case depends wholly upon the supposition that motives determine volition and that the strongest must prevail after the manner of mechanical causes. It is assumed that deliberation only delays the final issue, and that when it is past the existence of equal alternatives is past and the person has no real choice but to follow his character or the strongest motive. There are two, perhaps several, replies to be made to this. The first consists of the argument already advanced in regard to both the causality of motives and the relation of "character" to volition. It does not require to be repeated, as the student may refer to it for the purpose. The second is an application of the fact of deliberation and will repeat the argument for spontaneity with the substitution of *motives* for *stimulus*.

Motives are either the cause of volition or they are not. In the latter alternative their presence is not opposed to freedom, as the very nature of the case would imply. For if they did not cause it, and yet the volition takes place and objective determinism is excluded, there is nothing but the subject to account for the effect, this not being determined by motives, according to the supposition. On the other hand, if we conceive motives to be the cause of volition, this effect must occur immediately upon their occurrence in consciousness; for there is no third step, except deliberation, between them and the volition, and they cannot be the cause of it as long as deliberation intervenes. Deliberation interrupts the supposed causal nexus between the two terms. But if the motive be the cause, this deliberation is impossible. We might assert either or both of two assumptions: first, that deliberation is an equilibrium from the conflict of equal and opposing motives, or second, that there are distinct kinds

of motives, which are differently related to the law of causation. But this would not help us any in the case. If motives are different in kind and differently related to the law of causation, the whole case of determinism, subjective and objective, is lost for the lack of a single principle to explain the result. On the other hand, if deliberation is only an equilibrium between equal and opposing motives, then either no volition can take place at all, or when it does take place the strongest motive prevails and causes it, assuming, of course, that motives can cause it at all. But if the conflict be between unequal motives and the strongest must prevail, it must do so immediately and deliberation cannot occur. But it is a fact that deliberation occurs and that volitions take place, which they could not do if it denoted an equilibrium, and hence deliberation is either not an equilibrium between equal motives, or it occurs in connection with the so-called stronger motives. If it occurs with the latter it either produces an equilibrium and volition occurs without being caused by either motive, or it interrupts all supposed causal agency in the strongest motive, and in both alternatives something else than the motive has to be the cause of the volition, and the case of every form of necessitarianism is lost. Hence the necessitarian may choose between affirming the mechanical law of causation of motives as well as of stimuli and the fact of deliberation. He cannot hold to both at the same time. The strongest motive either does not exist or does not prevail; that is, has no causal efficiency, if deliberation takes place and interrupts its immediate issue in volition. It will not help matters to say that after the deliberation has occurred the strongest motive must then prevail, because *whatever strength it may then be supposed to have has been derived from the deliberate choice and decision of the agent outside the series of events assumed to determine the volition.* We do not care what takes place after reflection. The whole question of freedom is proved by the fact of deliberation while it exists, and nothing is gained by talking about the strongest motive afterward, because deliberation is said to be hesitation between motives already existing, and if they do not effect the proper

result at once, whether equal or unequal, it is for the reason that they have no causal efficiency at all in their constitution, and this agency must come from the reflecting subject, independently of the series of phenomena with which it is concerned. It produces the motives, weighs them, and if one be stronger than another, determines that strength by a spontaneous act of its own. In fact, motives have no strength whatever except what the mind gives them, so that deliberation is only a proof that there is no causal nexus between the mental events which make up life and that it must be sought outside the series, and once outside the series freedom is guaranteed, no matter what is said about the result of "character," as has been already shown.

But the argument of the necessitarian has both its strength and its weakness in the equivocal import of the term "motive." In so far as "motive" denotes an end, or an idea of several ends, there seem to be several alternatives offered the will, and this notion will give rise to the conception of a conflict, where presumably the stronger will prevail. But in so far as "motives" are only ideas of ends, they have neither strength nor causal efficiency. No one for a moment attributes initiative power to simple ideas or cognitions. They never move the will, and not having "motive" power, causally conceived, cannot exhibit any *moral*, but only a *logical*, conflict. Such thing as a struggle between them and the prevalence of the stronger is not possible. On the other hand, if the term "motive" denotes the emotional side of the assumed condition of volition, there is more reason for supposing it to have causal efficiency. *But in this case there may be only one motive*, and if so a struggle is also impossible, so that a competition between "motives," which the necessitarian admits to occur, is absurd. *In fact, therefore, his whole case rests upon his making out that there is only one "motive" in volition, and that on the causal side there is no alternative impulse to the one antecedent to the act.* Strange to say, however, the necessitarian has never asserted this view of the case. But it is not only the sole conception of the problem which will bear criticism, but it is, in the present writer's view, the truer conception of the

facts. "Motive," so far as it means impelling power, denotes a *desire*, and it is reasonable to claim that man can ultimately have but one desire, and this is the ultimate object of his pursuit, pleasure, perfection, wealth, power, etc. Assuming this for the moment, what we mean by *desires*, then, is merely many objects of a single kind of mental state. Desire does express both an object of consciousness and an attraction toward it. Now, there may be many objects of desire, but only one feeling or impulse regarding them, and there can be only one *ultimate* object of it. Deliberation is, therefore, about the means to this one end. What is called a conflict of "motives" is only hesitation about the choice of means, the choice of the end already having been made, and in fact predetermined by the nature of the subject. The deliberation, then, is not between "motives," considered as desire, which is only one in kind, but about ideas and means. This is precisely the doctrine of Aristotle, and it is not a little surprising to see his analysis neglected on all sides. But it means, if accepted, that a new conception of the whole problem is required, and it is a conception which corresponds, on the surface at least, to the necessitarian doctrine.

Analyzing "motives" into ideas of end and emotional impulse, and assuming that they have causal efficiency, we find that this quality must belong to the emotional element, because ideas *per se* are inert. But this emotional element or desire, minus its cognitive aspect, can be only of one kind considered as a psychological cause, and with that cognitive aspect can *ultimately* have but one object. There is, then, no comparison of impulses possible, but only of the means for gratifying the one fundamental desire of our being. In this case there is only one "motive" to act, and it *must* prevail, no matter what the choice of means. That is to say, a man cannot evade his ultimate choice and volition. This way of describing his condition is identical with the terms of necessitarianism.

If this view of the case were not the true one, and we could speak strictly of a conflict of desires, the argument already presented would have to be repeated. But accepting the conception

as the true one, it would seem that deliberation does not affect desire or the true motive, and that it can be only about ideas of ends which have no "motive" efficiency. Nevertheless freedom has two resources of escape which it will be interesting to examine.

First, the theory of freedom does not require that a man be able to choose for himself the ultimate end which his nature prescribes, but only that he be able to choose whether he shall realize it or not, and to choose between the objects presented as possible means to that end. That he does deliberate regarding those and that he does choose between them is a fact which can hardly be denied. Certainly they have no immediate effect upon volition when presented, as the law of causation would require, and since there is complete indifference toward them during deliberation *the subject must first determine their value and relation to the ultimate end of desire before they can be supposed to have any power at all; and this supposed power is derived wholly from the desire within whose scope they happen to fall. But it requires a choice of mind to decide this fact, which is an act of will prior to the one supposed to follow the desire whose realization is suspended for the time.* Not to urge this view too persistently, however, it is only necessary to observe that the capacity to choose among possible means to an end not chosen by the will is all that is absolutely necessary for freedom, because this is all that it may mean, and probably every one admits that such a choice is possible, while puzzled with the fact that a man finds the ultimate end of his life fixed for him by his nature and that it must represent a single desire.

The second argument is quite as effective. It is that a desire is not a "motive" when it expresses the passive or probable tendency of the subject's nature, but only when it is actively present in consciousness. That is to say, that man desires food means either that his nature is such as to need it at the proper time, or that there is a specific craving for it present in consciousness; for instance, a condition of positive hunger. In the former sense it can be neither a motive nor a cause of volition. That all will

admit. Hence, only in the latter sense can desire ever be a "motive," or be supposed to cause a volition. Now, assuming that the ideational aspect of the motive or desire can have no efficiency for the purpose, we are left to the emotional aspect for this desideration, and the only question that remains is whether it has such efficiency or not, and whether inhibition and deliberation influence it or not. Here we return to the same argument as before. If desire have, *per se*, motive efficiency it must produce volition immediately. The nexus must be direct between it and its effect while it is active. But this is not always the case, and may very seldom be the case. An active desire is often suspended for various reasons. But it matters not what the reasons are, *it does not have immediate causal efficiency when present, but is wholly subject to the conclusion of deliberation.* This is only to say that deliberation applies as much to desire as it does to ideas, and along with its arrest of the assumed efficiency of desire when present, only proves that under any conception of it, we cannot suppose that desire is the real cause of the volition or the choice. The necessitarian relies upon the involuntary and necessary occurrence of the desire as a mere expression of the subject's nature prior to any possible freedom, and then its causal efficiency when it arises. But arrest and deliberation destroy all such supposed agency or indicate that it is not present, and simply prove that mental phenomena, whether they are ideas or desires, are not the real or true causes of volition. Certainly, if the desire is not, which is the only event suspected of being the cause, we are left to consider the subject as actually engaged in deliberate choice between alternatives, either between various means to an end or between the realization and non-realization of a given end. In both cases we have velleity or the capacity of alternative choice. The case is much stronger if we suppose that more than one desire be possible at the same time, because the fact would show either that a desire *per se* has no causal efficiency or that the prevalence of the stronger would contradict the fact of deliberation, or that no volition would occur at all, as the argument before has gone to show. But the fact of



both volition and deliberation leaves us with the same conclusion as in the first case, that mere mental events are never the cause of choice and volition.

The importance of the fact of deliberation, therefore, comes from its furnishing evidence to much the same relation between desire or motives and volition as that which objective determinism would suppose exists between stimulus and volition. The reason that man is not the victim of objective influences is that *he is the spectator of them*. They can determine nothing except through the consciousness of the subject which has originating power, as is universally admitted, the only thing denied being the supposition of alternative choice. But man is also a spectator of his own states. This involves self-consciousness, or self-reflection, and in a measure makes the events of the mind objective to him, not external to the subject, as environment must be, but under the same control and limitations that we find in external influences. This, of course, is testimony to the fact and importance of both inhibition and deliberation, and from them we have the conclusion already enunciated. We may turn next to the third argument.

3. CONSCIOUSNESS.—The consciousness of freedom has quite universally been the argument which seems to carry the most weight with the laymen's mind, and philosophers of the freedomist school have given it perhaps the most important place among the various proofs advanced for freedom. So strong has it seemed, or so convincing at least to those who were biassed in favor of freedom, that the necessitarian has felt obliged to weaken or refute it in some way. It seems the clearest of all appeals that can be made, and where there is no misunderstanding about the terms of the case, it is probably a universal feeling, or nearly so universal as to make all other cases abnormal exceptions to be accounted for as such. But in order to avoid any possible confusion which might be incident to different conceptions of freedom as we have defined it, we must explain that by the consciousness of freedom we do not mean either that the agent is either always or ever conscious of it in all its senses,

or that he is conscious *that* he is free every time he makes a choice. But we mean merely that if he interrogates himself at the moment of choice, or is asked to state what his power is at that time, he would uniformly express consciousness of ability to have chosen the rejected alternative. This fact implies freedom. Consciousness of freedom, then, does not mean that we are always thinking of that freedom, but that, when asked about our ability to choose, we assert our consciousness of a condition that implies freedom; and that condition is the ability to choose otherwise than we have done, or to choose equally between alternatives. This fact, if it be true and unimpeachable, is everywhere admitted to prove a man's freedom.

Mr. Sidgwick, after admitting "the formidable array of cumulative evidence offered for determinism," asserts that "there is but one opposing argument of real force, namely, the immediate affirmation of consciousness in the moment of deliberate action." But after this statement Mr. Sidgwick admits that this consciousness "*may* be illusory." This is the objection always raised by the necessitarian. Mr. Balfour, again, admits the universality and even the necessity of this belief in the ability to elect between alternatives, but then asserts that it is an illusion. Here is his language: "In fact, no doubt remains that every individual while balancing between two courses is under the inevitable impression that he is at liberty to pursue either, and that it depends upon 'himself' and himself alone—'himself' as distinguished from his character, his desires, his surroundings, and his antecedents—which of the offered alternatives he will elect to pursue. I do not know that any explanation has been proposed of this singular illusion." Mr. Balfour then goes on to explain it in the following way: "I venture with some diffidence to suggest as a theory provisionally adequate perhaps for scientific purposes, that the phenomenon is due to the same cause as so many other beneficent oddities in the organic world, namely, to natural selection. To an animal with no self-consciousness a sense of freedom would evidently be unnecessary, if not, indeed, absolutely unmeaning. But as soon as self-con-

sciousness is developed, as soon as man begins to reflect, however crudely and imperfectly, upon himself and the world in which he lives, deliberation, volition, and the sense of responsibility become wheels in the ordinary machinery by which species-preserving actions are produced; and as these psychological states would be weakened or neutralized, if they were accompanied by the immediate consciousness that they were as rigidly determined by their antecedents as any other effects by any other causes, benevolent Nature steps in and by a process of selective slaughter makes the consciousness in such circumstances practically impossible." \*

As this argument is a typical one of the necessitarian, it may be prudent to give it the most searching examination. It is a charge of illusion against the consciousness of freedom and an attempt to prove the beneficent character of that illusion. But it is astounding that any one making the slightest pretension to philosophic intelligence, would resort to the kind of argument here used, not to say anything of the deficiency in the sense of humor betrayed by it. Had Mr. Balfour contented himself with charging the possibility of illusion against consciousness, as the skeptic would do, he might have left the burden of proof for its validity upon the freedomist. But to attempt to prove the charge when he has to accept the testimony of consciousness in that proof, shows a great lack of logical acumen, and then to prove the beneficence of an illusion is worse still. Now, it may be true that consciousness is an illusory guide, but this is nothing in favor of necessitarianism, as most persons intend it shall be, when they attempt to throw discredit upon the testimony of consciousness. If it be illusory, argument on either side of the question is perfectly futile; for I have nothing but the testimony of consciousness to the cogency of the argument for necessitarianism. But if that authority be impeached, I am as much in the dark about that theory as I can possibly be about freedomism. We must, therefore, charge an illusion against Mr. Balfour, in attaching any

\* *International Journal of Ethics*, vol. iv., p. 421-422.

weight to the argument for necessitarianism after rejecting the testimony of consciousness. Again, why be so defective in the sense of humor as to impeach the authority of consciousness, while treating the purely logical or ratiocinative argument against freedom as if it were free from illusion, when the fact is, that reasoning is perhaps a hundred-fold more exposed to illusion than immediate perception? An argument is exposed to the whole category of fallacies, and yet the author does not seem to suspect that fact, and as a consequence to see that the cumulative argument for determinism is exposed to more weaknesses than the consciousness of freedom. This is the second illusion found in his view of the matter. But there is another. When he talks about man "as distinguished from his character," he is deluded again by the equivocal nature of the term "character." No one ever distinguishes himself from his "character" taken as his *nature*, but only as his *habits*. The latter, we have shown, is never a cause, never *necessitates* volition, but may be changed; the former does not conflict with freedom. Again, the allusion to "surroundings" shows that he is introducing the conception of liberty or physico-political freedom into the case, which, whatever is said about it, has no relevancy whatever to the question about velleity or alternative choice. This is another illusion. Then again, why would not the sense of freedom be as beneficent for beings that are not self-conscious as for those that are? It is true that it could have no meaning to such beings. But how could it have any meaning to self-conscious beings, when it is false and illusory? Is not the fact that it is an illusion the very thing that takes away its meaning? Still worse is the supposition that the illusion has a beneficial influence on life, because, being an illusion, this conclusion can only mean that there is not the power of alternative choice, so that the sense of freedom cannot alter the course of volition. If it were *not* an illusion, it might do so, but the course of a man's conduct is so fixed by his nature, according to the supposition that an illusory belief in his freedom is only another name for events which have no influence upon choice. Moreover, what becomes of the illusion

and its beneficence when its nature is discovered? It is no longer an illusion to the man who discovers the fact. On the contrary, Nature has played a trick upon him in making him believe he is free, and then robbed the belief of its supposed beneficence by the philosophic revelation of its illusory character. Still again, what sort of beneficence can any man attribute to what is false? Would Mr. Balfour encourage the belief in the philosophy of any man because he believed it beneficent though false? And yet his ethics would require him to preserve the beneficent as opposed to the maleficent at all hazard, especially as Nature, according to his own view, has valued falsehood more highly than the truth. To illustrate again, if a man's nature inevitably inclined him to the wrong, how much could his belief, that he was able to do the right, affect his conduct? By supposition only the bad is possible in the case, so that a belief to the contrary is not only false, illusory, and ineffective, but it is not beneficent. To assert the beneficence of an illusion is the last resort of a desperate case, to say nothing of the ridiculous plight in which Nature is placed by the perpetual liability of having her purposes foiled by man's discovery of her illusions. The strangest thing of all, however, is to find men so confident that so universal, persistent, and firm a feeling as the consciousness of freedom should be probably illusory, while there is not the slightest suspicion of either the opinion or the argument asserting that illusion. One would think that men acquainted with the pitfalls of logic and with the liability of individual opinion to errors of conception and judgment would exhibit a little more modesty and humility in attacking a conviction which they practically admit cannot be dislodged, and would rather suspect that thorough scientific patience and analysis would discover a truth in it and illusion in the reasoning that seeks to impeach so firm a conviction.

We admit frankly, however, that the argument from the consciousness of freedom has its weakness; but it is not the fact that it may be illusory. Such a supposition, as already remarked, simply puts a stop to all discussion on one side or the other.

The real weakness of the appeal to consciousness is that it can never have more than a *subjective* or individual value. It could not prove anything except for the individual who has it, and others might not possess any such a power. Nor with the complex elements entering into the idea of freedom and the evidence for it could any except the persons professing consciousness of it be absolutely assured as to what the consciousness contained. We could only say, that if it be the same for all persons, or for the majority, or even for any number of mankind, it will have its value determined by its extent, but not beyond the number having it. But I do not think that its testimony can be either proved or impeached. It is itself the last court of resort for such truths as we actually believe, and it proves too much to discredit it and then accept other beliefs which it attests. I should prefer to accept it where it *honestly* attests its deliverances and where we have reason to believe that it is normal and healthy. If abnormal or unhealthy we simply know nothing about it one way or the other, for we cannot tell its contents. Its value even in normal cases depends upon the assumption that the consciousness of others is like our own where we feel forced to accept its testimony or give up all convictions whatever. It is, perhaps, the weakness of that assumption that impairs its *objective* testimony but not its *subjective* value. Moreover, in regard to it objectively it might not exist at all in some individuals, and it is even conceivable that consciousness might in some cases assert that the agent was not able to do otherwise than he did. That is, the person might be conscious of actions which he did not originate. These, of course, are what are called automatisms, such as twitching, automatic writing, and involuntary movements generally, which are not *volitions* at all. I would also admit the conceivability of volitions, of which consciousness might attest the impossibility of alternative choice. But this fact would not impeach the consciousness of any one else to the contrary regarding himself. It could not extend its value beyond the person having it, and if I had reason to believe that such a consciousness were sufficiently normal I should accept it,

while I would accept the contrary testimony of any other normal consciousness. This, of course, unfits the appeal to consciousness for objective proof, which, after all, is the one thing needed. But where it has been the invariable and, as Mr. Balfour says, the "inevitable" belief of all men in all ages, circumstances, and condition of development, its testimony cannot be set aside until the logical argument can be purified of all possibility and suspicion of fallacy. We turn next to an argument that has objective weight.

4. THE SENSE OF DUTY.—This is the famous argument of Kant for the fact of freedom. It has objective value because whoever admits that it exists in any person will find that he must choose between making the idea of duty useless or invalid and admitting the fact of freedom. Now, it is everywhere admitted that the sense of duty, "the categorical imperative," is a very widespread phenomenon, as general as rational beings in the wider import of that term. What it implies when it exists or can be appreciated at all is that the act enjoined by it is a possible one and yet might not be performed. If all men did what is right there would be no need of such an imperative. But there are constant deviations from the path of virtue, and where temptation may lead the agent aside the sense of duty comes in to command the pursuit of the ideal and assumes that the agent can obey. But if he cannot do so, this feeling is powerless to effect anything. If the will be inevitably set in any direction, it is impossible for the opposite alternative to be chosen, according to necessitarianism, and the sense of duty with the implied ability of alternative choice is an illusion, and it would seem a rather maleficent one at that, judging from the amount of pleasure of which it is supposed to cause the sacrifice. Moreover, an obligation to do the impossible is one of the absurdest suppositions ever entertained by a person professing to be rational. If the sense of duty were assumed to coincide always with the direction of the will we might sustain the thesis of necessitarianism. But such a conception equally proves its uselessness, because the individual's nature is sufficient to

accomplish the result by supposition without the presence of such a phenomenon. It would simply be a fifth wheel to the coach and more likely a useless incumbrance than an aid. Moreover, we know as a fact that it more often opposes natural inclination instead of coinciding with it, and in fact mental economy seems to have intended it to perform this very function, whatever else it may be supposed to do, and if the course opposed to natural inclination be impossible, as necessitarianism must assert, the sense of duty is quite as useless again as in the first case, as being unable to determine the will in a direction opposed to what it *must* go. The only possible resource left to the necessitarian is to deny the validity of obligation and to declare it an illusion, the *ultima Thule* of every man who finds himself cornered by logic and fact. The better way, however, is to frankly admit the validity and influence of the sense of duty and to accept what it implies, because the consequence of denying it is such a *reductio ad absurdum* of necessitarianism as to astonish rational men that the theory could ever have been proposed. By asserting necessitarianism we are obliged to assert the illusory character of consciousness and the sense of duty. By admitting freedom of some kind no such arduous task is imposed upon us, but the various facts of our rational nature are completely reconciled.

V. *CONCLUSION*.—In concluding the discussion of free-will it is most important to remark that the object of sustaining it has been to furnish a basis for our practical attitude of mind and conduct toward men. If the doctrine of freedom be declared an illusion our business is to eliminate it, its vocabulary, and all its implications from the provinces of philosophy and practical life. It has no business there unless it be true, or at least contains important elements of truth. On the other hand, if we adopted the position of the necessitarian without qualification we should find ourselves much embarrassed for a reason for certain institutions which we still insist upon maintaining, namely, punishment and the distribution of praise and blame. If in denying a man's freedom we mean to say that he is not the cause of



his own actions it is perfectly absurd to use any measures against him to prevent his conduct, because they could not be effective and because every method of removing an effect must divert or remove the cause. If, then, man is the cause of his own volitions, there is some need for the idea of freedom, if only in the sense of spontaneity, in order to determine and to justify our treatment of him. The fact is that there is territory for both doctrines regarding action. Many actions in the world—physical, reflex, automatic, and perhaps some others—are undoubtedly necessitated, beyond all possibility of being free in any sense, as not being caused by the subject in which they occur. But when the subject is a cause of action we require a theoretical position, not only to account for them, but also to serve as a basis for institutions and habits conditioned by it. Hence I contend that there must be room for freedom of some kind, if corrective discipline is to be rational at all. If a man can act only in one way, according to a fixed character, it is useless to try to make him act in any other way. To do so assumes that his nature is not fixed beyond modification by his own capacity of adjustment. There is no use to reply that a change of environment creates a new motive, because by supposition the agent is not capable of any other motive, his character and tendency being fixed or inflexible. A being who is capable of having more than one kind of motive is not only intelligent, but must have the power to decide between this and the natural one. Otherwise whatever adjustment he shows must be merely passive. With this passive adjustment given, of course, nothing can be said or done, because it would be necessitated. But man's conscious adjustment to environment is a different thing. Had he no power to act in any but a fixed way, as determined by his ancestry, or by a nature of only one impulse, he could not adjust himself even if he could feel a new motive. The capacity of conscious adjustment admitted by all thinkers practically is freedom of the highest type, and it is astonishing that men admitting it cannot get away from the illusions about the necessity of action according to character and its supposed opposition to the idea of freedom.

Take a practical illustration. We usually say that self-preservation is instinctive, and probably it is. No doubt the largest number of our ordinary actions have reference to the continuance and protection of our lives. We seem to have a perfectly uniform and fixed tendency to maintain life as long as it is possible for us to do so. But shall we say that our nature or character is so absolutely fixed that we cannot take our own lives? Yet this must be the consequence of any *necessity* for preserving them. But it would be replied that at the moment of suicide the agent could no more help committing that act than he could preserving his life before. Both are equally necessitated. But what becomes of the idea of the subject's nature or character in the case? By supposition his character predestines or predestines him to preserve life and he cannot destroy it. On the other hand, if suicide attests what his character is, why did it not necessitate the act of self-destruction before? Are we to suppose two opposite characters in the same subject existing side by side and one of them wholly ineffective until a certain moment? But if character can be ineffective for so long a time, as is usually the case with suicides, why attribute *necessary* causation to it at all? In fact such an illustration only proves the absurdity of arguing about the question in terms of "character" until we have determined what we mean by it, and after pointing out the equivocation in it, as we have done, we should perceive that it is no longer serviceable for clear thinking in a problem like free will. Moreover, the case also shows that we are obliged to make room for freedom in some sense in order to prevent our minds from becoming entangled in a mass of absurdities; and this is all that needs to be effected, though it is a fact that the idea performs other services at the same time.

But it is not necessary, in sustaining a doctrine of freedom, to hold either that all men are free, or that, if free, they are all equally free, or even that the same man is equally free at all times in regard to all actions connected with his will. For we may be confronted with the doubtful cases involved in insanity and those of imperfect development. So far as the theory and

conception of freedom are concerned, there may be many individual exceptions to it without interfering with it as a principle for sane and rational beings. The first object is to show the conditions and nature of freedom. It is another thing to show how many possess it. As defined it is possible over a very wide range of conscious life. The conception of it is not even limited to man, and it may be a question whether it is to be excluded wherever consciousness is found. But in thus admitting the possibility of its very wide prevalence we must not confuse it with responsibility, which we have still to define and discuss. We must keep distinctly in mind the conception to which freedom is limited, in so far as it is of practical importance to Ethics, and that is the *capacity* for alternative choice. In this capacity we do not necessarily include either the tendency or the habit of deliberation. For freedom may exist without deliberation, though we may lack the desired evidence for it. Hence it is not the tendency to think of alternatives and hesitate about them that constitutes freedom, but the consciousness that there are alternatives and the capacity for choice. Nor is it indifference to one or the other of the various courses offered to the will. There may be as many of these as possible, and the inclination for a particular one may be as decided as we like, if only in the consciousness of another and the feeling of duty toward it we find the *capacity* to choose it. Velleity, thus, is not mere equilibrium mechanically or morally conceived, which is the notion often entertained, but it is *the capacity for active or voluntary adjustment to environment*. This exists without a doubt to all who take care to analyze the problem correctly. But it could not be a fact if man were the mere puppet of that influence, or if his nature were so inflexible that he had capacity for only one kind and direction of his conduct. Once admit the capacity for conscious adjustment to a changing environment, which we described as a quality of rational beings, and the whole case of freedom is proved. It may not be so with responsibility, but that we have still to consider. We have, however, to establish its first and indispensable condition, which is the

possibility of choice or of alternative choice, and if the facts produced do not prove it as defined, it will have to remain unsolved until better arguments can be produced. But if the case is made out in its favor, we have a basis for responsibility and punishment as applied in the course of history, and that is a very important desideratum in the theory of Ethics. The extent of this importance will be seen when we take up those problems which are now to follow.

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## CHAPTER V.

### RESPONSIBILITY AND PUNISHMENT.

*I. INTRODUCTION.*—Freedom, Responsibility, and Punishment are questions that go together in Ethics, and the first conditions the second, and the second the third, and all of them are very complex conceptions. We have found how complex that of freedom is, and responsibility is much more complicated, though usually identified with freedom. Punishment, strictly considered as a process or defined as a mode of inflicting pain, seems very simple. But in its object and methods it appears quite complex and is determined accordingly by various conditions. The important general principle to be kept in mind here, however, is that both responsibility and punishment must go overboard if freedom in some sense is not true, while the innovation which we shall introduce into the doctrine is that an additional element must be added to freedom in order to create responsibility in its full extent, or in the sense in which Ethics usually employs the term. This is to say, that freedom may exist and yet responsibility not be realized at all, though the converse is not true. Let us examine the question.

*II. RESPONSIBILITY.*—We have remarked that freedom and responsibility are very often confused with each other, and that the controversy centering about the former properly pertains to the latter. Moreover, it is much more complex than the notion of freedom and is conditioned by every form of it. That is to say, a man's responsibility is very much affected by the influence of environment, confirmed habits, hereditary inclinations, and the peculiarities of character, while his freedom as capacity for adjustment may not be. We shall be told, then,

that the long argument for freedom has very little importance, if the claim of the necessitarian against freedom be admitted to apply against responsibility. It will be said that this is only admitting the case under another name, that after all, what the necessitarian meant is true. If responsibility is to be subjected to all sorts of limitations from both internal and external influences, and if it is admitted to be absent in cases where there is perfect freedom, it will be said we have not proved what we seem to have proved, and that the necessitarian has the right conception of the problem in spite of his language and of the arguments we have directed against him.

This, we grant, would be a fair way of putting the matter as long as our analysis remains incomplete. But when we have shown what enters into responsibility as usually understood, and what freedom without responsibility conditions in existing social and moral institutions, which would be wholly unjustifiable without freedom, the force of that criticism will be entirely lost. What we complain of is, that philosophers have confused two wholly distinct things, one conditioning the other, by identifying them; and then by denying one have denied the other by implication. Responsibility implies freedom of some kind, and in its proper form contains much more at the same time. But many of the arguments employed against freedom have no relevancy whatever to any question of the capacity of alternative choice, but only to responsibility, and in showing man's limitations in regard to responsibility, while assuming it to be the same as freedom, the necessitarian cuts away the foundations of institutions which neither he nor the freedomist will surrender. Hence, so far from admitting in effect the claim of the necessitarian the position here defended only makes it possible to be consistent in theory and practice, while it points out a new and humane consequence involved in the partial truth represented by necessitarianism and which its advocates seem not to have suspected. This is because they have not analyzed their problem. The importance of this will appear in the proper place. We must before discussing its practical meaning further define and analyze the

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conception, remembering, however, that we shall have a direct reference to the methods of Punishment.

**1st. Definition of Responsibility.**—The conception is too complex to be stated adequately in brief terms. But it will be helpful to indicate that its primary element is *imputability*; indeed this term is often taken as identical with it. Etymologically responsibility means a reply to a charge. In ancient law courts the accused had to answer to the charge made against him, and this was called his "responsibility." But the idea was transferred to him as the guilty party and came to denote that he had not only to "answer for," but also "to account for," the crime, which meant that he should pay the fine or penalty. The crime was imputed to him as its cause. From the imputation of *crime*, the term finally came to denote in Ethics the imputation of any act, good or bad, to the individual, and so denoted *causal capacity*, with the possibility of alternative choice. From this it passed to the idea that the agent was morally *praiseworthy* or *blameworthy* in his voluntary acts, a conception wholly distinct from freedom, but conditioned by it. But as the term has several loose significations the broadest meaning which we can give covering all of them is *imputability*, or the reference of certain qualities to the agent which make him liable to the consequences of his actions. But the distinct senses in which this is true, and the limitations under which it can be practically applied, must be determined before defining it more fully. We often use the term responsibility in a metaphorical sense, and often as identical with freedom, when in fact it is simple imputability which we have in mind. We must, therefore, examine the three forms of imputability as the generic idea of freedom and responsibility.

**2d. Forms of Imputability.**—There are three forms of this conception in the common usage of language, though the term which does duty for them is responsibility, which we wish here to give its proper definite meaning distinct from freedom. The three forms of imputability which are to be separately discussed are *causal*, *elective*, and *moral* imputability. The last is

synonymous with responsibility. Let us take up each one in its order.

1. CAUSAL IMPUTABILITY.—This is nothing but the reference of an act to its cause, and in the application of the term responsibility to describe it, as is done at times, there is nothing but a metaphorical sense given to it. Thus we say "the weather is responsible for the floods," or "the moonlight is responsible for much sentimental poetry," or "Bruin is responsible for his good behavior," etc. But probably very little confusion in Ethics is occasioned by an application so distinct from the proper sense of responsibility. Such a use does not distinguish at all between necessary and free causes. It applies equally to physical events and to spontaneous actions, like automatic, instinctive, and possibly impulsive movements. But rejecting the application of responsibility to the subjects of such actions does not remove the value of using the phrase causal imputability; for this expression means to imply a certain method of dealing with such causes or agents in the economy of social order. The organization of society requires that certain events and actions be prevented, if possible, and this can be effected only by treating their causes. If we can remove the causes we reasonably expect to get rid of the effects. In the application of methods to this end there is no consideration of rights or duties—that is, there are no limitations to our choice of methods—until we come to sentient beings, where we are supposed to treat, at least the higher and more harmless order of them, with due respect and compassion. If they can be said to have any rights at all, we have to treat them accordingly; and the same can be said of irrational members of the human race, such as the insane, imbeciles, etc. Throwing out physical causes as not involving any limitations of method whatever, causal imputability, as representing spontaneity in the agent, will determine its own method of treating such agents, of permitting their liberty when their spontaneous actions do not conflict with social welfare, and of preventing them when they do so conflict. There is, therefore, an important place for the idea of causal imputability



in ethical doctrine, since it enables us to use the freedom of spontaneity for the justification of a certain policy toward individuals having it and having nothing else.

2. **ELECTIVE IMPUTABILITY.**—This is the imputation of actions to beings who possess elective choice or *velleity*. It is identical with freedom as we have defended it in the course of our discussion, and it probably exists to some extent wherever consciousness is found, and certainly in its full extent wherever reflective or deliberative consciousness exists. Here again the term responsibility is purely metaphorical in its application to the case, because this form of imputability does not necessarily require a moral nature to be present. The capacity for alternative choice is all that is necessary for it. This will cover all the voluntary actions of at least the higher order of animal existence, and such of the insane and imbecile as can reasonably be supposed to have retained their elective power over alternatives. This condition will determine distinct methods of treating such agents in the social economy, as compared with those who possess nothing but spontaneity. Freedom, as we have defined it, is possessed in the full measure by agents to whom elective imputability is applicable, because they are the same thing in different relations, freedom or *velleity* being looked at as a capacity of the subject and elective imputability as a liability to certain consequences for his conduct. No punishment, strictly speaking, can be applied to such agents, nor rewards of an opposite kind. They are amenable only to such methods as will either do nothing but prevent their conflict with social order, or will both prevent it and modify conduct so that the agent can have his liberty. But there is no attribution of praise or blame to such agents, for they require more than mere freedom to be moral. That is an indispensable condition, but it is not the only one.

3. **MORAL IMPUTABILITY, OR RESPONSIBILITY.**—This is a much more complex conception than the others and must be considered very fully, because we wish to distinguish it quite radically from freedom, with which it is too often confused.

To define it, therefore, we have: *Responsibility is that form of imputability which involves the existence of conscience and freedom.* Conscience is here taken as equivalent to a moral nature, or the capacity for distinguishing between right and wrong, and of feeling a sense of obligation. Freedom also is taken in every sense of the term, including liberty, spontaneity, and velleity. The difference between responsibility and freedom, as defended above, is apparent from this definition, and it explains why we regarded the freedom of velleity as conditioning responsibility and yet as possibly existing without it. The importance of the distinction will appear when we come to consider the methods of punishment. We must first examine the nature, conditions, and limitations of responsibility as it has been defined.

**3d. Nature and Conditions of Responsibility.**—The nature of responsibility is stated generally in the definition of it. What we are to remember and make clear before entering into its conditions is the manner in which it is to be distinguished from freedom as the capacity of elective choice. This is simply the capacity of voluntary adjustment to environment and may not be more, though it includes the power to elect independently of external influences. But responsibility is the capacity for electing both freely and *righteously*. The former may exist perfectly in non-moral and irrational beings, taking the latter to include the insane, imbecile, and certain classes of criminals, while the latter can exist only in moral agents. The constitution and conditions of moral agency or responsibility, therefore, will appear in the following important data.

**1. PSYCHOLOGICAL FREEDOM.**—This means that the agent must have both spontaneity and velleity; that is, be the cause of his volitions and capable of alternative election. A man who is not the cause of his actions is certainly not one to whom we could impute them, though he would not yet be properly responsible if we could say nothing more than that he is the cause of them. An illustration is found in instinctive, automatic, and probably certain forms of insane actions. The agent is not regarded as responsible in such cases because the element of rationality is

excluded from them. Rationality is essential to responsibility, whatever else may be included. Again, a man who cannot possibly elect a volition other than a fixed one is an automaton, if he acts at all, and cannot be responsible, because responsibility implies elective capacity at least. No one disputes this, though it may contain more. But we certainly exclude it from actions not involving that capacity for the reason that we expect such a possibility with rational beings. Deny it and whatever else the agent may possess he cannot be responsible.

2. PHYSICO-POLITICAL FREEDOM, OR LIBERTY.—This, as already defined, is exemption from restraint, and is a very important condition of responsibility, because we have pointed out that psychological freedom—that is, both spontaneity and velleity—may exist in spite of all conceivable restraints. It may not be effective in producing any result where compulsion may arrest the physical movements of the body. But the choice and volition may be executed without regard to restraints. Responsibility, however, can exist only to the extent to which the subject is exempt from restraints determining the conditions under which he must act. Hence it is proper to say that liberty is a condition of responsibility, but not of spontaneity nor of velleity. An illustration will make this clear. The best example will be that of the slave. We are accustomed to saying that the slave is not a free agent. This is not because he cannot disobey his master, or cannot act in any other way than a fixed or prescribed one, but because his course of action is under restraint, is determined for him. The master has laid down the conditions under which the slave shall choose with impunity. Hence freedom in this sense means choice with impunity, or non-liability for consequences that are voluntarily accepted; it does not mean choice absolutely considered. The slave is placed between what he must do and what he must accept as a consequence, not between alternatives of his own making. Hence he is not responsible for the act, the necessity of which has been fixed by his superior. The law and common sense have always treated this class as exempt from responsibility in all obligations which are

not imposed by their own wills, and in all actions which are prescribed under penalty by the master. Yet they are free in the psychological sense, as free as any one else could be who is not under a master. It is precisely the same with all agents under similar limitations. The officers of the law, for instance, are not responsible for their duties or for the acts made necessary to fulfill those duties. The law is an expression of other wills than their own, and the officer after election to his position, or the acceptance of it, has no responsibility for the acts prescribed by the law, because he has not himself determined the alternatives between which he must choose. If the law be wrong, and the officer knows or is capable of knowing that it is wrong, he may then be indirectly responsible, where other considerations do not interfere, for accepting a position which involves a wrong that he can prevent. But if no act or choice of his can prevent the fulfillment of the law, and if he be liable to punishment for not fulfilling it, he has no responsibility in the case. This rests upon the law-makers. But it is not necessary to follow a matter of this kind into all its details. The main point to be illustrated is that a man's responsibility for an act depends upon the alternatives between which he is placed quite as much as it depends upon his capacity of electing between them. This is why there must be at least a certain measure of liberty or exemption from restraint, as well as freedom or velleity, in order to secure responsibility, and it does not matter from what source the restraint or limitation comes, provided only that it is a superior power which subjects the agent to limitations that affect his personal welfare, perfection, rights, or other immunities. The nature and extent of those limitations will be considered presently. For the moment it is enough to know that external influences or a restriction of liberty that does not affect the abstract capacity of elective choice may interfere with responsibility, and that, other things being equal, with the possibility of voluntary adjustment to environment, this responsibility will coincide with the liberty here indicated, or appear to be identical with it. It is this which has given rise to the confusion between freedom

psychologically considered and responsibility, and consequently the denial of freedom, the moment that responsibility was found to be limited by external influences. It grew out of an ordinary illusion of identity in regard to two things denoted by the same term, and then a fallacy of equivocation in the argument which the controversy about free will involved.

One thing to be remarked under this topic is the relation of responsibility to the subject's rights and duties, a relation which is not involved in free will, though conditioned by it. We assume that a man has the right of self-preservation, of self-realization and culture within certain limits, and that he has certain duties resting upon him. These duties, and therefore the subject's responsibilities, are dependent, not only upon the possibility of his electing for them, but also upon the possibility of performing them when he does elect; that is, upon his "freedom" from an alternative which conditions his welfare in another more important aspect. Thus I may say that it is a man's duty to exercise the right of the elective franchise, and he is responsible for not so doing. But this is wholly dependent upon its relation to the risks of health, life, or property involved, even though he have the power to perform in the case. And so with a man's rights. If external influences impose an alternative that conflicts with the subject's rights, though free to choose or reject this alternative, he is not responsible for it, *because he is not responsible for or has not determined the conditions under which he must choose in the case.* This is the most important condition of the responsibility, while it has nothing to do with the *capacity* of elective choice. It is not a condition existing in any absolute degree, but is subject to indefinable limitations. It is only to say that responsibility will exist in the proportion in which man has the opportunity to determine the alternatives from which he shall choose. If they are determined for him he requires nothing more than freedom for adjustment and survival. But if he can determine them himself, if he can propose a moral ideal whose realization is not excluded by the necessity of consulting lower ends for survival, and if his own personality is not at stake in

the case, while his freedom, psychologically considered, is not affected one way or the other, his responsibility is so affected, because it depends more on the power to act *independently* than *in spite of* environment. Or, to put the same thought in a way that shows how freedom and responsibility have been confused, we can say that freedom of will depends on *capacity* for elective choice, and responsibility upon the *opportunity* of action without objective limitations.

3. CONSCIENCE OR MORAL CAPACITY.—Responsibility is a characteristic that is not attributed either to the animals or to irrational men, such as the insane, the imbecile, and certain classes of criminals. The main reason for the fact is that moral reason is excluded from these classes. The principal distinctive feature of man, compared with animal life, is the fact that he has a well-developed moral nature, and it is often supposed that there is no connecting link between the two classes because of this fact. We shall not go so far as to determine this question, as it has no bearing upon the *theory* of responsibility, but only upon its application. The present purpose is gained if we can insist upon the enormous distance between the typical species of both classes of existence, and note that it is marked by the presence in man of what goes by the name of a moral nature. This is the chief factor of responsibility because it is determined by the matter of praise and blame, or merit and demerit. It involves all that is still to be examined more carefully in the study of conscience, but which may here be summed up in intelligence, moral feeling, and the sense of duty. Conscience is simply the mind acting as a determinant of the ideal, of the choice demanded for its realization, and the monitor of the will in its volitions. Man is responsible in proportion as it is present and active in his life. To show this we have only to see how we adjudge the conduct of children, of savages, of the illiterate, of the passionate, of the defective classes, in all of which the moral faculties either do not exist or are less developed and active in their lives. We do not think them less free than mature and well-developed species of the race, because their power of choice is the

same as those; but their responsibility differs because it is so much more dependent upon the power to determine the values of alternatives than upon the power to elect from them. Conscience is the power which effects this estimation, and until it does this, and imposes an obligation, true moral responsibility does not exist. The term can only be used metaphorically to describe any other action, no matter how free it may be. Responsibility is thus conditioned much more by the *range of knowledge*, as applied to moral distinctions, than upon merely conative capacity or elective choice. Freedom requires knowledge, consciousness; but it requires only to know what the particular alternatives are from which the choice is made, while responsibility requires, in addition, to know the moral quality of the alternatives. It is thus the *kind* of knowledge which effects responsibility, and we may contrast it with freedom by saying that the primary element of freedom is *power to do*, while that of responsibility is *morality*. This is clearly illustrated by the large class of persons who are exempt from praise or blame on the ground that they do not know the character of their conduct, and who, from the existence of moral and intellectual defects, cannot be expected to know it. Even animals may have power to elect, but not to distinguish right and wrong.

Still another way exists to show the distinction between freedom and responsibility. We do not attach praise or blame to actions unless the agent is capable of knowing their character. He may know what the alternatives of choice are, and have the power of choice, but unless he knows or can be made to know that one of them is morally preferable to another we do not praise or blame him for them. Praise and blame attach only to *moral* agents, and not to those who are nothing more than *free* agents. The former quality involves the existence of conscience, and the latter does not, though it is a condition and element of the effectiveness of conscience when it does exist.

It is also important to remark that responsibility exists in different degrees, according to the degree of development possessed by conscience. It is not an absolute quality existing in the

same degree in all persons or not at all. It has all varieties of degrees according, on the one hand, to the influence of environment, and on the other, to the extent of moral development. But throwing aside the influence of external agencies, the modifying influence of development is shown in two different ways. First, responsibility is absolutely conditioned by the *capacity* for knowing that there is a right and wrong, and second, its degrees are conditioned by the *extent of actual knowledge* regarding the nature of particular actions. There can be no responsibility whatever unless the agent can appreciate or be taught to appreciate what is meant by right and wrong, but it is not completed by this merely general distinction. The extent of it depends upon the agent's knowledge of the particular acts that are connected with the distinction. Hence there are two different forms of responsibility which determine degrees of punishment to be examined presently. The first requires that the agent have the capacity for estimating moral values, and the second that he know what actions agree or disagree with them. In other words, the first and absolute condition of responsibility is the *capacity* to know a moral *end*, and the second is *actual* knowledge of the *means* to it. Thus I require in a child that it be able to know that cruelty is wrong, that it is a bad end to pursue, before I can think of holding it responsible for such an act. On the other hand, even if it knows that cruelty is condemnable it is not responsible for that result if it does not know that given actions terminate in it. This is the distinction between the intention as applied to ends and intention as applied to acts. It everywhere holds good, and is reckoned with both in courts of law and the judgments of practical life. Exemption can be purchased only by proving ignorance either of moral distinctions or of the character of the acts involving them. To summarize the conditions of the two different degrees of responsibility, the first depends upon the *capacity* for moral knowledge and the second upon the *extent* of it.

4. RATIONAL EQUILIBRIUM AND SUPREMACY.—By this condition of responsibility I mean subjective control corresponding



to objective freedom or liberty. The less perfectly developed species of men undoubtedly are influenced by passion, instinct, or hereditary evil inclinations to an extent that may well handicap them in a struggle requiring a strong moral nature to survive in it. They may be able to choose, to resist these forces, and actually may elect for the wrong, conscious that the opposite course is the one enjoined by the social organism. But the better elements of reason and moral inclination may be kept down so that neither prudence nor conscience operate effectively, and in all such cases humane minds act indulgently in the distribution of praise and blame or responsibility. Where the organic nature of the subject, whether physical or mental, keeps up before consciousness a craving desire for some object without interference of the subject's will, there is a force that may produce an act that we regard as wrong and yet we shall have to limit the agent's responsibility, mainly because the act may not be a deliberate choice or volition at all, but a mere automatism, or it may be a mixture of both. Organic cravings for which the agent is not responsible, with their predisposition to check deliberation, do much to determine the alternatives between which the agent has to choose before he has time to reflect on their character, and though he is perfectly free he will be responsible only to the extent in which reason and conscience enter into the determination of the choice. If impulse, passion, instinct, and hereditary inclinations act *dynamically* alone, there will be no responsibility and also no freedom but that of spontaneity. But if they are accompanied by consciousness, they will be free in proportion to its influence on the result, and responsible in proportion to the activity of conscience and its power to effect an equilibrium against natural appetites. It is here again that freedom and responsibility have been confused, and the former conceived as *indifference to motives*. Now, responsibility does require something like indifference, balance, or equilibrium. But it is not indifference to *motives*, but to organic tendencies, which act as restraints upon deliberation much as objective restraints limit the opportunities of free choice, as it is called.

There can be no indifference to motives in the last analysis, for reason must have its own motives; nor must the indifference be freedom from inclination and emotional desire altogether. It must be exemption from their impulsive, reflex, or automatic effect upon action. The equilibrium here considered, therefore, is not a  *motiveless* consciousness, but a *deliberative* consciousness, which can make the subject's own feelings and natural desires an object of restraint and control *without a resort to limitations of objective freedom or liberty*. This is only another way of saying that moral perception is more or less a condition of responsibility, but not of freedom as capacity for elective choice. The inhibition of all the reflex, impulsive, and automatic forces of the system, whether physical or mental, is necessary to give deliberative reason control of the field, and the balance, indifference, or equilibrium of which we speak, is only the subject's exemption from the play of mechanical and organic impulses which would prevent his actions from being strict volitions, and more particularly from being volitions with an accompaniment of moral consciousness. Action under the motivation of reason will condition freedom; under the motivation of *moral* reason or conscience it will determine responsibility.

**4th. Limitations of Responsibility.**—After what has been said of the conditions of responsibility its limitations require to be little more than enumerated. They are respectively the opposite of its conditions and may be dismissed briefly as follows:

1. **THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT.**—This limitation is not due to the mere presence of external agencies, but their power to render impossible the realization of anything but self-preservation. Thus, where economic conditions involve the expenditure of the subject's whole time and energies in bare self-support he is not responsible for the failure to realize any higher good. He will be responsible only to the extent to which he is not compelled to act in self-defense, assuming that he has the right to it, and to which he can determine as well as choose his end for himself.

2. **INHERITED IMPULSES.**—It is not heredity *per se* that limits responsibility, because even this might be inherited. But it is the inheritance of organic tendencies which reflect a defective conscience, or which more or less predetermine the alternatives from which the subject is to choose. We make a man responsible for his habits because we assume that he originates them and that he is aware of their character. But he is not responsible for—that is, neither originated nor knew the nature of—the cravings which offer his will an object of volition. To the extent, therefore, to which moral balance or the sovereignty of reason and conscience are subordinated to irrational instincts, the agent will be limited in his responsibility, though not in his capacity of choice, under the necessity of adjustment.

3. **DEFECTIVE KNOWLEDGE.**—Ignorance, if it can be proved, is always a legitimate plea of defense against responsibility. The agent may know what is right and wrong in the abstract, the ultimate end which he ought to seek and that which he should avoid; but he may not be sufficiently conscious, owing to no fault of his own, of the particular conduct which is causally connected with that end, and hence not being involved in his intentions, the connection cannot be a basis of responsibility in the case.

4. **DEFECTIVE MORAL CAPACITY.**—A man may have a good intellect and a wide knowledge of facts and of the relation between means and ends, but if he lacks the capacity to estimate or feel the value and imperativeness of moral ends, if he lacks that conjunction of social, intellectual, and moral instincts, so called, which determine the value of certain ends to be realized, he cannot be regarded as completely responsible. His conduct can only be prudential, not moral, and his responsibility will extend only so far as his moral nature is developed.

The only criticism likely against all this will be the charge of the necessitarian, that we practically admit his whole argument by granting these important limitations to responsibility. This, as we have already admitted, appears very fair. But it wholly mistakes the issue, while as a matter of fact we do not suppose

the limitations as universal as the necessitarian does the absence of freedom. We have merely shown the conditions under which responsibility must be limited or absent, and probably the proportion of mankind wholly without it is very small, while if we admit that it may exist, as we think it does, in indefinite degrees, there is room for selecting typical instances for illustrating and justifying moral and social policy in its manner of dealing with men. But the issue which the necessitarian mistakes is, whether man can choose between two alternatives of which he is conscious, while the arguments which he produces against this possibility are drawn almost wholly from questions of morality and responsibility, which are much more limited than freedom. Freedom, as here defined, is as universal as consciousness, at least the deliberative consciousness, which is not limited even to man; but responsibility can be found only where we find moral capacity. Hence, though we admit limitations to this, we rely upon a more universal freedom as the very condition of moralizing man by education and discipline, while the necessitarian in denying freedom, which he himself defines as capacity for elective choice, cuts off every possibility of this result and with it the basis of every institution aiming to accomplish it. This is apparent in the system of Mr. Spencer. On the one hand, he says that the primary influences which have given rise to moral consciousness have been religious, political, and social restraints, and on the other, he denies the freedom of the will. But if man is not free and cannot choose any other course than that prescribed by his character, then his character is either not that of a free agent or he cannot modify it by any submission to restraint. Political, social, and religious restraints can do nothing with a man who cannot freely and voluntarily adjust himself to them. It is precisely because he is free that we impose restraints and inflict punishment upon man in order to moralize him. Otherwise we could not expect to modify him or his conduct. Hence as a condition of developing moral capacity, or at least moral habits in the agent, we must have freedom or velleity, which is a more universal quality of intelligence than moral conscious-

ness, and with the dawn and growth of moral consciousness will come responsibility in its appropriate degree.

**III. PUNISHMENT.**—Punishment, again, is a term used in more than one sense, and, like freedom and responsibility, requires to be analyzed. This will be done by considering its definition and divisions.

**1st. Definition of Punishment.**—Punishment, strictly speaking, is *the infliction of pain for wrongdoing*. This, however, does not fully state its object, while modern writers wish to distinguish its proper object from that which is too often connected with the infliction of pain, namely, vindictiveness. Etymologically the term denotes the infliction of pain, and remotely is taken from a root which implies that the object of it was to produce penitence for wrongdoing. It is synonymous with penalty or consequences imposed upon action to prevent its recurrence. At first this penalty or punishment was inflicted with the purpose of *avenging* the wronged party. It was done by the process of requital in kind (eye for eye, tooth for tooth), but in course of time an equivalent was demanded and received as a substitute, and quit money was accepted as adequate compensation for injury in most cases. The term punishment took on the new meaning and retains it still, though it has not lost the significance of the infliction of pain for the sake of satisfying vindictiveness or moral indignation. But it is precisely this mental attitude which a high civilization wishes to eliminate from its methods of punishment, and hence, though it retains the infliction of pain in its policy, it does not inflict it for pain's sake, but only as a means to the moralization of the individual, when the penalty can be removed. Thus pain is not the *object* but an *incident* of its existence. Hence in its broadest sense to denote what modern practice and conceptions would have it mean, *punishment is the imposition of restraints with the infliction of pain because of wrongdoing and for the purpose of prevention and correction; rarely, if ever, for retribution*. This is a very complex conception and comprehends several objects which are distinct from each other and depend upon different conditions.

But it is noticeable that it aims to eliminate the original, conception and object of punishment. We may, therefore, take up the kinds and conditions of punishment as comprehensively understood.

A fundamental feature in determining the conception of punishment is the fact that no one applies the term to processes attempting to affect the conduct of animals or of imbeciles and the insane. Punishment denotes a method of treating free and responsible agents. We may inflict pain upon animals and men whom we do not regard as rational, but we never mistake this for punishment. We inflict it either out of malice or for the purpose of preventing certain irregularities of conduct detrimental to human welfare. Often the pain is nothing but a necessary incident of our object. But punishment in no case expresses either the nature or the object of the process. It can properly apply only to moral beings and is an incident of responsibility.

**2d. Kinds and Objects of Punishment.**—What are called the kinds and objects of punishment are expressed in the same terms. They cover every means employed by man in his social capacity, or in the capacity of exercising legitimate authority, to regulate human conduct and to protect the order which he endeavors to establish. But they can all be resolved into three forms.

**1. PREVENTION, OR PREVENTIVE RESTRAINTS.**—Prevention, strictly speaking, is not a *form* but an *object* of punishment. This was practically made clear by the fact that punishment can strictly apply only to free and responsible beings, freedom here expressing the capacity of alternative choice. But a policy of preventing wrongdoing can apply to beings who are without these qualities and yet be an object of the treatment applied to those who have them. This matter aside, however, what we wish chiefly to remark is the condition of applying even preventive restraint. It is the fact that even prevention cannot be applied to the conduct of beings who are not the cause of their own volitions. Necessitarianism of the objective sort, which magnifies the determining influence of environment, cannot even

apply or justify the application of preventive methods to agents who do not originate their own acts. Prevention must, to be rational, always apply to causes and not to effects. If man's conduct be bad, we can prevent its recurrence only by removing its cause, and if man does not cause it, he cannot be the subject of preventive restraint. The only thing amenable to such a system is the cause of the act, and hence man must at least have the freedom of spontaneity before we can morally justify any method of imposing restraints or inflicting pain upon him. But preventive methods do not go beyond this. They do not stop to consider whether the agent is free and responsible in the higher sense. They only consider his *value* in the social and moral economy, and subordinate his existence, rights, and liberties to that economy. Thus if an insane man commit a murder, we do not punish him. We confine him under restraint to prevent similar deeds in the future on his part. We do not attempt either to reform him or to make his restraint an example to others, for the reason that he is not responsible. We may attempt to *cure* him of his disease, but not to *correct* his will. It is the same with animals and all agents that may be considered simply as the causes of their actions, and nothing more. We restrict their liberties; that is, confine them, and aim to do nothing but prevent the evils they are capable of producing. But we do so only upon the supposition that objective necessitarianism is false, and that the agents are free to the extent of spontaneity; that is, of being the causes of their own actions. This is one practical count against the unqualified adoption of necessitarianism.

2. CORRECTION, OR CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINE.—Correction, like prevention, expresses an object rather than a form of punishment. It involves the infliction of pain or the imposition of restraint for the purpose of modifying the subject's character and his restoration to liberty. This is not the object of prevention, which cannot change character, or at least never expects to do so, for the reason that it is not founded upon that possibility. It is perfectly compatible with subjective necessitarianism. But

not so with corrective discipline. This is a method which cannot be applied to agents who are nothing more than the causes of their actions. It assumes that character is not a fixed and unalterable quality, but that it is modifiable by voluntary adjustment to circumstances; that is to say, it assumes that a man *can* act otherwise than he does, or that he can choose between alternatives which, as we have seen, would be impossible under necessitarianism. Correction, therefore, assumes that a man is a free agent, that this freedom goes beyond spontaneity and includes velleity. Otherwise the whole system is absurd. A man who cannot modify his conduct under discipline, and hence who is not free, is not a subject for any kind of punishment: he is fit only for a madhouse. He must have the capacity of voluntary choice, elective volition, before he is amenable to reproof or correction, for the simple reason that a fixed character is not capable of change. If the agent be insane he may be cured, but not corrected or reformed. Correction depends wholly upon the capacity of free adjustment to circumstances. It is no answer to say that his environment, external influences, modifies his conduct, because, if this determines it, we have seen that the subject is not the cause of his own actions and is not even amenable to preventive methods. A being who can consciously adjust himself to environment is not the subject of a blind instinct that goes on in its momentum and shows no adjustment to change, but has the capacity of elective choice as the one condition of correction. It is fatal to the method to suppose that the modification of habits, which every one admits to be a fact in many, perhaps the majority of cases, is merely a passive response to external influence, because, if it were so, the old character would return to the control as soon as restraint was removed. If not permanently modified by corrective punishment, the subject would have to be permanently confined. But the fact that his character becomes modified in many cases sufficiently to restore his liberty is proof that it is not unalterable by himself, that the agent's will and free choice count for much in the result; nay, are the primary condition of it.



The effect of all this is to propose a dilemma for the necessitarian. He must abandon either his theory of the will or his theory of punishment. It is the necessitarian who has always advocated most strenuously the restriction of punishment to the purposes of prevention and correction. If he confined himself to prevention there would be no quarrel with him. But when he admits that punishment is designed to correct and reform the will, and that it actually avails to produce this effect, he abandons the fundamental assumption of his theory of volition, which must hold that character is an unalterable datum. Otherwise there is absolutely no difference between freedomism and necessitarianism. But as long as he insists upon the antithesis between these two theories of volition he must either abandon his own doctrine of it and accept the fact of freedom or confine his theory of punishment to prevention. He cannot hold to both of them at the same time.

The relation of corrective punishment to responsibility is a complicated one. While moral responsibility is not necessary in any degree to the modification of habits, the application of this method to man invariably assumes a measure of it and aims to increase it. So far as mere change of habits is concerned this can be effected more or less wherever there is free choice, and is not limited to the human race. But among animals the effects of discipline are soon obliterated, if the individual's natural condition is restored, and since the value of animals is not measured in moral terms, whatever discipline is applied to them is designed to mold habits in accordance with economic considerations. It is only in man and among those of the race of whom no suspicion of insanity, intellectual and moral, can be entertained, that discipline is applied for the purpose of improving personal character and preparing him for the right enjoyment of social rights and civil liberties. Hence it assumes a measure of responsibility, if only of the slightest degree. If the man who does a wrong to society can draw the distinction between right and wrong at all, he is liable to corrective discipline either as a mode of instructing him regarding his specific duties,

or as a lesson in the formation of better habits. But he is responsible to the extent of his knowledge in the case. Not that ignorance of the law will excuse him before the courts, unless it can be proved, but that he is required to prove this ignorance and freedom from bad intentions. This limitation aside, however, it is a fact that defective knowledge and defective moral capacity will exempt a man from full responsibility for his actions, so that the measure of his punishment is graduated to this fact as well as to the amount of injury inflicted, while it is made solely corrective in its object, the design being to develop conscience from a passive to an active, from a *static* to a *dynamic*, function in the economy of the individual's life. Corrective punishment respects personality and aims to fit the individual for his liberty, and not merely to get satisfaction out of the infliction of pain. It assumes that conscience and respect for duty are either not dominant among the motives of the subject, or are defective in their development, and hence it endeavors to give them the place which deliberation upon unpleasant consequences for disregarding them is expected to produce. It makes allowance for all the limitations of responsibility which we have enumerated and tempers the severity of the punishment accordingly. It assumes a certain degree of it and the capacity under pressure to adjust oneself to environment and to form habits in which conscience and respect for public welfare shall predominate. It aims also to increase that responsibility by making the reasons for its limitation less cogent and by increasing the respect for law, which is a function of conscience.

It is important to remark a confirmation of this position in the recent doctrine that imprisonment for crime should be for an indefinite period, its expiration to be determined by the degree of development in character and self-control. This view abandons the notion of compensation for wrongdoing altogether and conditions restraint and discipline wholly upon the degree of responsibility possessed by the subject, he being confined until he can voluntarily modify his will and habits, when he may be allowed to have his liberty again. It has a purely humanitarian object, the very

opposite of the system founded upon the exaction of satisfaction for wrong, is governed by compassion for mental and moral weakness that handicap the individual in the struggle for existence, and aims to establish the supremacy of rational functions in the life of the individual by promoting prudence and self-sacrifice, which are rendered absolutely necessary by the severe pressure of environment represented by restraints.

3. RETRIBUTION, OR RETRIBUTIVE PUNISHMENT.—This is punishment proper in both form and object. It is what is often called punitive justice, which follows the old conception of rendering satisfaction for crime in terms of pain. *Retributive* expresses this idea, denoting a return for ill done, which is supposed to be the equivalent of the wrong. It was a mode of satisfying the person supposed to have the right of revenge. In the earliest stages of life the individual wronged was granted the right and power to avenge himself. Society handed the criminal over to the injured party, or permitted that party to decide the mode of punishment. The next step was to assume the function of executing the revenge itself, as more likely to temper the punishment to the crime and to control or eliminate the mere desire for revenge. This transfer of the right of revenge to society was a decided advance in civilization and humanity, in that it restrained vindictiveness and encouraged a judicial treatment of wrongdoing by employing the judgment of more disinterested parties in making the award. The progress of civilization has been gradually moving away from the notion of pure retribution in punishment, although the conception of punishment and the feelings of man toward wrongdoing retain some of their original import and intensity. It is hard to eradicate from man and his institutions the notion of *desert* in the infliction of punishment, and the fact is decidedly in favor of retribution, if not in its motive, certainly in the measure of pain inflicted, because it is a criterion of the degree of responsibility supposed to characterize the subject. But the ground upon which it is placed is not the worth of personality, but the amount of injury done by wrong. When applied in its pure form it pays as little

attention to the correction of the individual as does the policy of prevention. Indeed it is practically nothing but prevention *plus* the satisfaction of revenge, at least in its original form, while its later form, though eliminating the right of the injured party to decide the punishment, endeavors to determine the amount of desert more calmly and judicially, but nevertheless gives some respect to offended morality in the severity of its measures; whether justly or not it is unnecessary to say at present.

It is superfluous to say anything about the relation between necessitarianism and retributive punishment, for they are absolutely opposed to each other. Necessitarians must suppose that moral indignation, with its tendency to inflict punishment vindictively, is absurd, because a man's actions, if necessitated, are no more to be blamed than the falling of a stone, and assuming this, the satisfaction of revenge can accomplish nothing either in the way of compensation or correction. They must think so in regard to retribution, though they grant that it cannot be helped and that it is as much necessitated as the volitions which they account for in their way. They can only regard it as one of the many inconsistencies of nature which does not square with their theory and their humanity. Hence they must oppose all legislative attempts to adopt retribution as a motive of punishment, though their sense of humor apart from the fatal necessity of their own action might teach them that it was useless to do that.

But whatever the relation between necessitarianism and retributive theories of punishment, it is important to observe that retribution assumes perfect responsibility for conduct. Inasmuch as it has not been identified, and could not consistently be identified, with indefinite periods of restraint, it assumes equality of criminal character as well as criminality of conduct, and shapes the penalty to suit its view of the supposed fact, and that is that there are no palliating circumstances in human weakness and defects. It assumes that crime is committed in cold blood, with perfect consciousness of its nature, its consequences and heinousness, and without any palliation in bad

education, environment, habits, and heredity, and for this reason supposes all men equal. But in spite of this assumption common sense has been too strong to follow out the theory consistently. Concessions have been made, consciously and unconsciously, from time to time in the course of progress to the feeling that men are not morally equal and that they are not equally responsible. This opinion has been too well confirmed by the doctrine of evolution, whose chief value lies, not in any new end which it discovers for the moral life, nor in any new principles which it might enable us to apply, but in the decided limitations which it proves to exist regarding responsibility and the moral equality of men. In this it has dealt a useful blow to the theory of retributive punishment, if not in wholly eliminating its principle of desert, certainly in showing the caution with which it should be applied. If necessitarianism were only a theory of limited responsibility, which it is not, the humanitarian movement for the rational treatment of criminals, which has been associated with it, might have saved it from much hostility. But it has so thoroughly antagonized the doctrine of free will as to make its humanitarianism absurd, showing once more that men are usually better than their theories where they are serious at all. But even if the theory has its weakness, the conception of man and his limitations which has been associated with it has been more correct perhaps than that of the freedomist who in advocating freedom has assumed or asserted a doctrine of responsibility which was as untrue as the necessitarian's denial of freedom. Probably both parties equally misconceived the issue, and the consequence has been a useless controversy on both sides. The reconciliation of both of them by the admission of freedom and the denial of perfect and equal responsibility in all men, confirmed and conditioned as this latter is by the unequal moral development of men, prepares the way for modifying or abandoning retributive punishment and substituting corrective discipline for it. Correction is the only motive that can keep down passion and set up reason in the administration of punitive justice. More-

over, with indefinite periods of restraint, this system can adapt itself more readily to man's limited responsibility and make his moralization, rather than retributive satisfaction, the main object of his discipline. This, after all, is the process of nature with man. It is one of development into higher degrees of responsibility, and social institutions should imitate it in their methods. It does not assume that men are equal, but aims to make them so. Corrective discipline, therefore, is the only policy consistent with men's unequal responsibility, and it effects its purpose by the modification of their environment and the application of all influences that can affect their habits. This is the method of nature, though it shows more patience, mercy, and long suffering than man himself in the administration of its laws. The history of man's whole growth in responsibility is the history of evolution and of education. All the complex arrangements of environment, political and social institutions, education, penal discipline, religious sanctions, and conditions meant to arrest the first impulses of the will, are agencies which presuppose moral inequalities and therefore limited responsibility, but aim, by directing man's habits, to secure him the right to a larger liberty. All punishment should aim to imitate this system of moralizing forces. It should make the life of the criminal one of probation instead of retributive suffering, and it proceeds upon a mistaken conception of responsibility, if it does not allow for ignorance, passion, heredity, and similar influences. The responsibility of scholasticism is an ideal, not a reality, and punishment while assuming its limited character should be directed to the development of it into a higher degree.

*Note.*—There is a question as to what determines the *degree* as well as the kind of punishment, and the doctrine of indefinite periods of confinement would seem to imply that it depends upon the degree of responsibility. If "degree of punishment" be synonymous with indefinite periods of restraint, this would be true; but it is not altogether so. As above presented, the less the responsibility the longer the restraint, and the greater the responsibility the shorter the restraint, assuming in the former case that the punishment requires this to be effective, and in the latter that it does not. But when it comes to punishment other than merely the pre-

ventive form, the greater the responsibility the severer the punishment, and the less the responsibility the milder the punishment. This is especially applicable to retributive forms of punishment. But the kind, and degree of penalty is not wholly determined by the degree of responsibility. It is also affected by the character of the act apart from the responsibility of the agent, or rather in addition to it. Punishment of every kind can be applied only to actions in which social welfare is infringed; that is, it applies only in matters of justice, and *this is determined solely by objective morality*. Responsibility being the same the degree of punishment will be proportioned to the amount of injury done, and the amount of injury being the same, the period of restraint will be proportioned to the degree of responsibility possessed by the agent. This is determined solely by *subjective* conditions. But the fact that objective morality may vary with the same degree of responsibility makes it necessary to vary the pressure exerted by penalties in order, on the one hand, to strengthen the motives against temptation, and, on the other, to compensate for the amount of injury done in a crime.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE NATURE OF CONSCIENCE.

*I. INTRODUCTORY.*—The discussion of the preceding chapter revealed the fact that the existence of conscience was necessary to responsibility. It implies that freedom, being given responsibility and conscience, must stand or fall together. If we hold that man is responsible we must also assume that he has a conscience. On the other hand, if he has a moral nature he must be responsible. The two conceptions are in fact practically identical and connected with the same social interests. It remains now, after having stated the relation between conscience and responsibility, to investigate the nature of conscience and to discuss the various problems involved in the history of controversies about it. Thus far we have only alluded to conscience as a sense of duty and as a motive to volition of a special kind. But we took no account of its peculiar character as a distinguishing trait of man, farther than to regard it as offering the highest motive to the will. We have now to examine its constitution, development, and authority, all of which enter into the questions regarding its function in the economy of life. This process will involve the study of several matters of interest which will be comprehended in the history of the *idea* expressed by the term, the history of the term, the philosophic conception of conscience, its analysis, and its development. They might all of them be comprehended under its definition, but this will appear too broad a use of the term to embrace the question of the analysis and origin of conscience, and hence we shall confine the definition to the other topics.



**II. THE DEFINITION OF CONSCIENCE.**—A complete definition of what is expressed by the term conscience involves a rather elaborate process. It is not enough to know that it may be regarded as a particular moral faculty, because so many conceptions of it have been held that we should pre-empt the value of many of them by forestalling all interest in their meaning. Hence the definition of what we shall finally regard as a very complex function must be preceded by a study of the growth of the idea expressed by the term conscience. As a preliminary definition, however, we can adopt the notion that *conscience is a name for the consciousness of moral distinctions and of the obligation to respect them*. In this conception we have not identified it with moral nature, because that expression is often taken to denote various functions which may regulate right conduct without involving the sense of duty. This may be a wrong conception, but it nevertheless exists and assumes that morality may be purely objective and our disposition to realize it nothing more than prudence and instinct, which will go by the name moral because they happen to be directed to what is called a moral order. Conscience, however, may be a reflective capacity concerned with the consciousness of man's relation and duties to this moral order, and requires to be examined as such, though we shall often find it identified with the general notion of a moral nature.

**1st. History of the Conception.**—The conception of conscience is much older than a term to denote it specifically. It was not clear and well defined at first, because no conception ever becomes so until philosophic analysis is applied to it. But the consciousness of a peculiar function in man's moral life and nature appeared probably as early as he began to respect social feelings and to mark conduct or desires in conflict with them. Perhaps if we were to push inquiries back into the lore and legends of savage life we should find traces of the idea in the social institutions there adopted and the behavior of those who respected or violated them. But we need not go so far back as all this. We can be content with the ordinary limits of occidental history, with

which the philosophic interest of modern times is more particularly connected, including herein a brief allusion to Judaistic development, but confining the most of our attention to Hellenic thought.

The first trace of the idea of conscience, showing a high grade of civilization, is probably found in the mythological conception of the Furies. At first these were, of course, external divinities whose business it was to avenge crime, and no element of conscience as an internal faculty would appear to have been present. But aside from the testimony to a moral nature which such a myth represents, when the rationalistic age appeared it utilized the idea to express the revenge which a man's own remorse inflicted upon him for his wrongdoing. This was the natural result of a desire to obtain a useful meaning or truth out of what men were forced to admit was literally a legend. In many of the Greek poets the spiritual, that is, moral conception of the Furies, coupled with their well-known disbelief in the external existence of such beings, can only be interpreted as evidence that they found in man's nature an avenger of wrong, the reaction of his own nature against the violation of better instincts. This was a limited conception, it is true, but, though it goes no farther than to express the feeling of remorse and penitence for wrong already done, it goes as far as many a popular use of the term still goes, which in fact is due to that very usage and conception. Some writers, as Benn, for instance, dispute the right to consider the Furies as in any way representing the idea of conscience, for the reason that the term does not involve any premonitory distinction between right and wrong, but only a dread of consequences after the act. But this wholly depends upon the question whether we shall limit the conception of conscience to a cognitive power or allow it to include the retrospective emotions. Usage is not always the same in this matter. Sometimes conscience seems to be merely an intellectual power to show man the path of duty and sometimes it is the retrospect of consciousness upon its own course of conduct, and nothing hinders us from supposing that the two may go together, while we

assume that mythology, with the moral interests of the age which it represented, emphasized the emotional element as showing the most distinct traces in man of a capacity for respecting the rights of his fellows, even if they appeared only after the deed was done. Besides, all students of human nature have recognized in the various features of the Furies the reflection of what is popularly called conscience, and thus the representation of a literary analysis. Whether we choose to regard it as representing the whole of what is thought of as conscience depends upon the definition, but it certainly indicates the belief in a function of mind which is more than mere prudence or regard for self, and displays the social element of man's nature, which becomes absorbed in the later notion of morality and its sanctions. That function seemed unique to the primitive mind, and the power which it did have, or should have, might well be personified in the conception of deities who were to be the avengers of wrong.

A passing allusion to the story of Cain and the curse he was to suffer for the murder of his brother Abel, suffices to show that Judaistic thought had recognized the same peculiarity in man, though the intellectual fortunes of that people did not give rise to so elaborated a view as Hellenic literature. The idea, too, seems not to have survived nor to have been needed after the establishment of "cities of refuge," which were a protection to the criminal from too much license in the exercise of revenge, though beyond their limits this passion seems to have enjoyed free development. This political arrangement to punish wrong, with its slight limitations seems to have made the moral appeal, found in Hellenic thought, either unnecessary or ineffective. At any rate, little more than a hint of what the rationalistic mind finds in the idea of the Furies of Greek mythology ever appears in Jewish legend and law. But if it did not discover the retrospective and emotional element of conscience, it found a social conception equally important in its notion of *faithfulness* or fidelity of will to a principle of righteousness, which was only another name for conscience as a director of man's conduct

toward his fellows and in his relation to the moral law. In the Old Testament this conception is very prominent, and it represents to the moralists, the prophets of that time, the conception of that peculiarity in man which distinguishes him as a moral being and which now goes by the name of conscience.

To return to Hellenic thought, the "dæmon" (*δαίμωνιον*) of Socrates has often been regarded as the equivalent of conscience, and it is even supposed that Socrates intended his view of it to be a doctrine of conscience. This we regard as a mistaken view of it, reflected rather from the admirable and conscientious character of Socrates than from what he meant by his doctrine. There are three characteristics in his doctrine of the "dæmon," governing him and his conduct, which shut it out from being conceived as denoting conscience in any proper sense of the term. They are: (a) It was an *external*, not an inner, monitor of his conduct; (b) it was a warning *not* to act, and never an imperative to do the right; (c) it was a *supernatural* influence advising Socrates against certain things that were imprudent and whose consequences he could not foreknow. All these shut it out from being anything like what we call conscience, except in one accidental feature of being to some extent a guide to conduct. But whatever the resemblance in this respect, it was too far removed from the cognitive and emotional ideas of conscience to be included among the representatives of it.

Plato's conception of reason regulating desire was much nearer the later doctrine of conscience than the "dæmon" of Socrates. It represents in the mind a higher power than desire and passion, a power which has the highest good for its object and which keeps the other two in subordination to itself, or moderates them to a due mean in their satisfaction. The latter is the truer conception of its function, and shows why Plato did not reach so radical a distinction between desire and reason as many modern writers make between desire and conscience. With Plato both may have the same object in kind, but not in degree or rank. Desire was likely to be irrational and intemperate in its pursuit of good, while reason kept

this impulse under control and directed the will to a remoter end, which, though the good of desire, was adjusted to the perfection and virtue of the individual subject. But the modern doctrine of conscience often wholly rejects the good of desire as its object, and sets up another of a different kind by radically distinguishing between the good and virtue, the good being happiness and virtue action according to law, or a quality of will. The distinction is one which probably cannot be clearly made in the last analysis in any sense that would wholly separate the good from virtue, but its motive has been to separate desire and conscience sufficiently to prevent the confusion of moral objects of volition with that of merely natural desires. But in so far as reason was a power subordinating all other impulses to a higher law, it represented at least one function of conscience as universally understood.

Aristotle and the Stoics followed in the same general line of thought, the former, however, being less ascetic than the latter, and in that respect does not develop the antithesis between desire and reason so emphatically as Plato and the redoubtable Stoics. Moreover, the use of the term reason to denote the general cognition of truth, apart from morality was likely to confuse its meaning with that of a power supreme over impulse and which was not cognitive at all, and hence the Stoics seem to have been the first to employ a term which denoted the consciousness of *right* as opposed to the consciousness of fact or truth, and which ultimately came to denote consciousness in general. It was a term for "concomitant knowledge" (*συμπεῖδησις*) and in later philosophers was often distinctly used for conscience. It denoted reflective knowledge on matters of conduct. It was the idea of a power to perceive the right *prior* to its performance, as the mythological conception was that of self-judgment *posterior* to the act, and so was an attempt to distinguish duty from truth, though the distinction became clear with time and under the influence of another type of thought. There was also in the Stoic philosophy the consciousness of man's entire subordination to nature, the duty to live in obedience to the law of nature and

reason, which, if it was not a doctrine of conscience, represented much the same conceptions as that doctrine. The sacrifice of desire to this higher law with its stern resistance to the pursuit of pleasure resembles and may even be said to have given the coloring to the asceticism associated with the modern idea of conscience. The idea but not the name was there, though it did not reach so well-defined a development as under Christian thought.

The Epicureans had no place for the idea, and the Neo-Platonists absorbed it in a doctrine of religious ecstasy, which did not distinguish, as the modern doctrine of conscience does, between the moral and the religious. This distinction, however, is due to an age that was more skeptical in regard to the divine, and yet retained its conviction of the importance of social order and law, to which it confined the function of conscience. The Neo-Platonists make the moral and the religious objects of volition the same, and with them Christianity agreed, while following the asceticism of Plato, the Stoics, and the Neo-Platonists.

In spite of the lofty conceptions of Stoicism and Neo-Platonism, Greek life generally did not approach a doctrine of conscience in its conception of the right. Before the Stoics the resemblance is lost in the conception of prudence, wisdom, and the highest good, which, while they involved the control of natural desires and passions, nevertheless represented an attraction of reason which was less exacting and required less of the notion of sacrifice than the modern conception of conscience. The Greek always interpreted the object of volition as a good, even when he called it virtue, and drew the distinction only when he wanted to lower the rank of pleasure and to elevate that of perfection, though he always admitted that pleasure was its accompaniment. He did not think that the attainment of the good involved any struggle except with himself. A life according to nature was at the basis of all Greek consciousness, inasmuch as it looked upon nature as an ideal system of reality. The antithesis between nature and God had not yet been raised. The world was organized in the interests of man, and he had only to regulate the

anarchic tendencies of his own impulses in order to attain the good. The sacrifice involved was not regarded as a sacrifice, inasmuch as it was compensated by a higher good, and hence the object of volition to the Greek consciousness was always presented as an attraction, a fascinating good, if only the individual could be made to see it. Even the submission of the Stoic was not a surrender of self to the insatiable demands of law, but was only a rational adjustment to an order which brought ineffable peace and contentment with it. But in Christianity, and later thought, with their opposition between nature and God, added to that between desire and reason, there was the sense of a struggle against opposing influences in the pursuit of virtue which was seldom if ever felt by the Greek. The modern notion of conscience was born of struggle *against* nature, not for adjustment to it. It appears most distinctly in Christianity, especially in St. Paul, where it denotes a life of sacrifice and struggle, of opposition to the world and the flesh, external nature and passion, wholly repudiating pleasure as an object of true volition, and ever since, the conception has retained more or less of that coloring, as is clearly indicated in the prevalent notion that duty is always opposed to interest. It also adds more distinctly the notion of self-judgment to that of conscientious direction of the will, while distinguishing more clearly than even the Stoics the conflict between the law of reason and of desire.

Scholastic and mediæval thought simply developed what Christianity inaugurated, namely, the sense of struggle with the world and with desire in the process of regeneration, and defined conscience as the oracle of God in the human breast, commanding inflexible obedience to His will and intensified the sacrifice of natural pleasures to the attainment of salvation. But when the Renaissance, with its revival of Greek ideals, the Protestant Reformation, with its inherent tendencies to Rationalism, and the industrial development, with its purely economic and social ideals, appeared, the notion of conscience became secularized, losing its religious import, though retaining all the inflexibility and absoluteness of its traditional signification. But with the confluence

of so many streams of thought, it has gathered into its folds most of the conceptions that have been affiliated with the morality of all ages and has become too complex to be described by a single epithet, though it is distinguished from ancient thought by the sublime and unbending adhesion to law which it commands against the allurements of passion and pleasure.

**2d. History of the Term "Conscience."**—The history of the term conscience partly coincides with the history of the idea, but not altogether so. The Stoics seem to have been the first to adopt the Greek equivalent of the Latin *conscientia*, namely, *συνείδησις*, and were followed in its employment by the Neo-Platonists and New Testament writers, principally St. Paul. Its earliest meaning was *self-consciousness* as opposed to mere knowledge of the unreflective sort, and did not denote conscientiousness as conscience does to-day. It was to denote a more distinct conception of responsibility and moral character that the term was adopted, to indicate, not only that the agent was conscious in his action, but that he was conscious of this consciousness and could control his action by deliberation. Hence the first conception was self-consciousness as distinguished from conscientiousness, though it involved a conception of right as distinct from truth. St. Paul's usage of the term gives it a more modern coloring, though it is possible in most cases to substitute consciousness for it. With the development of Christianity the term began to differentiate from the primary meaning of the term from which it was taken until mere consciousness is not enough to indicate its meaning and the two ideas are quite distinct in all but the French language where conscience and consciousness are denoted by the same term (*conscience*). To consciousness the idea of conscience now adds the conception of conscientiousness or the sense of duty, submission to a law of reason, often, if not always, in antagonism with interest and desire. But in the course of its history it absorbed all the associations and implications involved in morality and the influences designed to make it effective. This can be illustrated by examining some of the current definitions of the term.



**3d. Current and Other Meanings of the Term.**—The various definitions of conscience have taken their coloring from the general philosophy of the men giving them, now having a theological import, and now an ethical, as distinct from the purely cognitive function of the mind. This will be apparent from the examination of several of them.

Bishop Butler defined conscience as "the principle in man by which he approves or disapproves of his heart, temper, and actions." This conception makes conscience wholly an emotional capacity of estimating the value of objects of will. If judgment be even implied in it, that function is so remote from the notion of cognition that it does not require to be taken into account. But certainly the prominent element is emotion both of the *prospective* kind, which forecasts the ideal and obligatory object of volition, and of the *retrospective* kind, which expresses the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the subject with his conduct after it is done. Yet there is nothing in this definition which expresses, more than by implication, the sense of imperativeness so generally associated with the conception of conscience.

Dugald Stewart says: "Conscience coincides exactly with moral faculty, with the difference that the former refers to our own conduct, while the latter expresses the power by which we approve or disapprove the conduct of others." This is a very interesting definition, inasmuch as it distinguishes between the mental states involved in self-judgment and those in the judgment of others. For instance, penitence and remorse can only be felt in reference to self. We cannot feel remorse, but only grief, for others. Remorse is self-condemnation, and in so far as conscience is the power of reflection on our own personal responsibility, it cannot be identified with the feelings that pronounce judgment on others. Hence Stewart reflects the influence of the popular mind upon his conception of conscience, and thus makes its limits narrower than moral faculty. He seems, however, to make it wholly emotional in its functions.

Schopenhaur is quite emphatic in the same limitation. He does not identify it with moral faculty at all. He defines it

simply as "the satisfaction or dissatisfaction, approval or disapproval, of ourselves." What the judgment of the conduct of others would be, this view does not say.

Wuttke defines conscience as "the revelation of God given in rational self-consciousness." This is a purely theological conception which does not even imply a judgment of conduct, and comes from that early period of thought when conscience was supposed to be the only trace of the divine in man. But instead of reflecting the moral in man as divine, it indicates nothing more than a revelation of what could not be found in nature. It expresses no faculty to perceive right and wrong apart from external authority, which virtually dispenses with the need of conscience altogether, as it is ordinarily understood. We require to know whether in man moral faculty is anything more than mere intellectual acumen for perceiving distinctions which it cannot enforce.

Martineau, in accordance with his peculiar theory, regards conscience as the power to judge of the relative value of competing springs or motives in consciousness at the same time. This is interesting only as making it purely cognitive in its nature and adjusted to the purely relative character of moral distinctions in a developing creature. Neither its merits nor demerits can be considered here without going into Martineau's general ethical theory, which cannot be done in this treatise. We can only allude to it as a unique definition.

Dorner is more comprehensive in his conception. "Conscience," he says, "is a knowledge of moral good and combines the functions of a cognitive, a legislative, and a judicial power." This view most distinctly recognizes the several and complex elements entering into its constitution. It represents, first, the power of *perceiving* that there is a right and a wrong, the consciousness of moral distinctions in general and in particular, which is a peculiarity of moral faculty. Then, it recognizes that most important function of conscience which represents it as legislating for the will, imposing a law for its guidance and constraining it to obedience. Lastly, it includes the judgment

or verdict pronounced upon conduct; it denotes, in its judicial functions, the sense of approval or disapproval of conduct, the emotional estimation of it before or after its performance. These involve a combination of all the elements recognized separately by the other definitions and make it truer than they to the various uses of common life. It will conduce to practical purposes only when it can be made thus comprehensive.

The definition of Dörner cannot be easily improved upon, for it recognizes precisely the elements which predominate in the fully developed conception of conscience. But in order to express the comprehensiveness of it, on the one hand, and the intimacy of its connection with general consciousness, on the other, we shall define the sense in which we shall understand the term in our present discussions. Instead of regarding it as a separate faculty of the mind in the old sense, when it was thought that it was a sort of external addition to intelligence in general, we shall consider it as a complex function embracing this and other aspects of mind as well. Those definitions which make it purely cognitive in nature treat it as a simple faculty; so also those which make it merely judicial or merely legislative, and they very greatly confuse the problem of its development, as well as that of its authority and power. We shall, therefore, treat it as a complex organism, and define it in the most comprehensive terms possible. *Conscience, as here understood, is the mind occupied with moral phenomena.* This conception of it does not treat it as a special faculty distinct from the others as emotion is distinct from cognition. Were it a unique simple power, we might define it with such limitations. But we regard it as too complex, as comprehending too many functions in the unity of several relations to a common end, for us to treat it as a simple power. Hence it is best to regard it, so far as it is a power, as the mind exercising any and every function related to moral objects. The importance of this comprehensive view will be apparent when we come to analyze its full contents. At present we wish only to emphasize the fact that it is *not* a simple faculty.

One thing to be noted in this definition is that it does not

involve the supposition of anything different in nature about conscience from other mental activities as such, but only in the objects to which those activities are applied. The advantage of this will appear in discussing the evolution of conscience. We are in the habit of distinguishing the various capacities of the mind and maintaining that one of them cannot be a modification or derived quality from the others. This is true of such states as cognition and emotion, sensation and memory, etc. If, then, we regarded conscience as a faculty in this sense it would seem to be unique and underived. But by speaking and thinking of it as the mind in one of its relations we put it on the level of such conceptions as "scientific capacities," "artistic capacities," "mechanical genius," etc., all of which merely denote the operation of the same functions either in different proportions of combination or as applied to different objects. Thus "scientific capacity" does not employ any different functions from the "artistic." Consciousness, perception, feeling, will, are involved in both of them. But the direction of them is not the same. In scientific activity perception is the passive observation of facts and their causal order; in art it is the consciousness of an ideal order. In scientific employments emotion is curiosity and its satisfaction; in art it is æsthetic enjoyment of order, harmony, color, and the pleasing incidents of life. In science the will is attention and the direction of observation; in art it is both attention and the executive act of producing something. But we see in both the same functions with only a change of object and direction. The main object of science is truth; that of art is beauty. But art cannot disregard truth and the emotions to which it gives rise, and science cannot wholly eliminate emotion from its pursuits, though it modifies the mode of their application. The same general truth holds good for conscience or moral capacity. It is not a new and distinct function compared with the others of the mind. It is only their combination in different proportions and with a different object, unless we except the unique and independent character of the sense of duty, the "categorical imperative." But apart from this peculiarity it is certainly nothing

but the mind employed in a certain way, just as science is the mind employed in its way. That the sense of duty or moral constraint is not wholly indigenous to Ethics might be maintained from its resemblance or identity with the sense of logical necessity, the constraint of truth.

There is one important fact to be observed in giving such a definition as is here proposed. It is that in philosophic usage the term conscience has a very interesting ambiguity in connection with the traditional and current discussions about it. The definition adopted endeavors to avoid it. But sometimes the term conscience is used to denote merely a power or capacity which may or may not manifest itself but yet exists. This we shall call the *transcendental* import of the term, but meaning no more thereby than that there is something more conceived by it than the mere mental states which are illustrations of its activity and proofs of its existence. There is the second meaning, which applies to any one or all of the mental states which represent it. This we shall call the *phenomenal* import of the term, and shall mean thereby the manifestations of the mind which show moral perception and feeling. The first or transcendental meaning denotes a *capacity*, power, or faculty; the second denotes a *phenomenon* or group of phenomena.

The importance of this distinction will be discussed when we come to consider the evolution of conscience. At present we require only to understand the meaning of such statements as that a certain man "has no conscience." This may mean that he has no capacity for appreciating moral distinctions of any kind whatever, or it may mean only that he does not exhibit certain feelings and sympathies which we should expect of him. Thus a man commits a peculiarly cruel crime and we describe him as without a conscience, though not necessarily implying that there is nothing in him to be trained to know and feel the right, but only that he has not shown and does not show it. This is only to say that although the faculty may exist, it is not active or effective. The definition which we have given is designed to cover both conceptions, so that we can be at liberty

to use it in either sense as occasion may require. It is no doubt most general to employ it to denote a certain group of phenomena as effective influences molding the life and conduct of the individual. But the other meaning lurks in the background often enough to make the affirmation and the denial of conscience less contradictory than the statements are intended to be. This will appear in its proper place. We must now proceed to the analysis of conscience.

**III. ANALYSIS OF CONSCIENCE.**—The definition of conscience has shown us that it is not a simple faculty with only one single function, but a complex set of functions connected with the mind as a general agent and differing from the same functions otherwise employed only in the objects about which it is concerned. The analysis of it will further show this complexity. But it is a complexity of functions rather than a complexity of agents. This is already evident enough. But in analyzing it we are to remember that we are not intending to analyze it as a faculty; that is, transcendently, but phenomenally. We shall separate the various elements that compose it as a name for a group of phenomena, so as to find what it is that gives conscience its complexity. In this analysis we shall find that it is not quite coincident with what is called moral faculty at large, which includes autonomy and volition; that is, conative functions, while conscience seems to be confined to intellectual and emotional functions preceding the action of the will *as an effort to realize morality externally considered*, though aside from this limitation it may contain elements of will subjectively regarded. The will enters into conscience only in so far as it is represented in attention, interest, and good disposition. Hence our analysis while taking account of the fact will lay the most stress upon the intellectual and emotional elements.

**1st. The Intellectual Element.**—By the intellectual or cognitive element of conscience we mean the consciousness of some ideal object to be attained and the judgment of discrimination between what is right and what is wrong. Those who limit conscience to approbation and disapprobation of conduct do not

ascribe cognitive power to it at all, and yet we require to *know* not only the ultimate end which is called good or bad, right or wrong, but also the particular actions which lead to it. Moral judgment is the name for the process of distinguishing right from wrong, and it is simply the cognitive element of conscience which enlightens, leads, and guides the emotional and impulsive functions to the right end. It gives the *knowledge* of virtue, but not its *power*. It is the cognition of the good as distinct from the perception of truth. No matter how correct our feelings may be, moral judgment is required to determine for us when we shall act rightly; not when the will is correct, but when it is rightly directed. Conscience determines its ideal, and moral judgment is the element of it which decides when a particular act agrees or disagrees with that ideal. The criminal who knows what is right, but does not feel the constraint of duty sufficiently to obey it, has the cognitive element of conscience sufficiently to establish his responsibility. In fact, whatever feelings of constraint or approbation a man might feel they would be of little avail, in establishing responsibility, if they were not accompanied by intelligence as to the end to which they were directed. The principal function of conscience in determining responsibility is knowledge of the end and of the means to attain it, and knowledge of its character. Moral judgment is governed by this cognition in discriminating between right and wrong actions as means to an end.

**2d. The Emotional Element.**—This represents in general the feeling attending our judgments of conduct. We may call it the feeling of right and wrong as distinguished from the mere perception of truth. It is this peculiarity which has given rise to the idea that conscience is unique in its nature and excludes cognition proper. It comprehends more or less of the sense of obligation or the feeling of constraint that a certain thing ought to be done and a certain opposite thing ought not to be done. Perception is an element of this complex, but it is not the distinguishing element. It is the emotional element of appreciation or depreciation that distinguishes the act from purely

scientific judgments of fact and truth, and both gives the phenomenon greater complexity and endows it with greater power than mere knowledge. It is the first condition of its influence on the will, and distinguishes morality from the satisfaction of truth, on the one hand, and from the feeling of beauty on the other. Science and art have their own emotional accompaniments, but they are different in their quality from those of morality, at least in respect of the object which awakens them. The emotional aspect of conscience is social and personal, directed to the value of man as a personal being, while that of science and art is impersonal, directed to truth and beauty as objects of contemplation. The feeling of right and wrong is thus connected with *personal worth*, whether in self or others, and respects all conditions affecting that worth. It shows itself in a variety of ways and relations, now in the contemplation of actions and ideals still to be realized, now in the contemplation of actions already performed, and again as an impulsive feeling in the direction of approved actions. But we can resolve them into two general kinds, the *judicial* and the *legislative* functions of conscience.

1. THE JUDICIAL FEELINGS.—These represent the mental verdict pronounced upon the character of conduct, the judgment of its worthiness or unworthiness. It is illustrated when we look at an act of honesty or contemplate it as beautiful or good, approving of it as an object of will. The mental satisfaction or tone of elevation felt when planning a course of virtue, or exhorting it upon others, is another illustration of it, and it is again prominent in looking back upon actions already performed. Hence these feelings may take two forms, the *prospective* and the *retrospective*. The prospective are the reflexes of what appears as ideal and moral to us, the sense of rightness and wrongness antecedent to a volition, the approval and disapproval of possible acts. The retrospective are the same feelings after the act, the satisfaction and dissatisfaction in regard to conduct already realized. They are especially prominent in the elevated feeling of self-approval, or consciousness of recti-



tude, and the opposite feelings of remorse, penitence, self-condemnation, grief for wrongdoing, etc. It is in these feelings that we get the most distinct evidence of personal responsibility, inasmuch as we cannot produce or prevent the volitions of others. We can only approve or condemn them. But where the satisfaction for righteousness and dissatisfaction for sin, or self-approval and self-condemnation, appear we have distinct traces of conscience or a feeling of more than mere prudence and interest in the results involved. This is the reason that conscience has so often been identified with the retrospective emotions. But it is just as much evident in the prospective which serve to give motive power or efficiency to the cognition of virtue and to eliminate or inhibit it in the case of vice.

2. THE LEGISLATIVE FEELING.—This is also a prospective emotion in the sense that it usually antecedes volition. But it is not of the nature of approval or disapproval. It is rather an injunctive or imperative feeling, the sense of constraint or necessity which the idea of duty expresses, and represents a sort of sovereignty over the unregulated and irrational impulses of the subject. It is the most important and distinctive of all the elements of conscience. It is this which Kant expressed by the "categorical imperative," a sense of unconditional obligation which allows no liberty to the will in the pursuit of desire, and wherever it exists it excludes all other alternatives of legitimate choice. It is the moral law issuing its commands, and exacts either unconditional obedience or the acceptance of the consequences of disobedience. Where it is present the highest degree of responsibility is possible, assuming that the right and wrong are known correctly. It is not necessary to conceive this sense of duty as essentially in conflict with desire. It may be in perfect conformity with it. But it expresses nevertheless the feeling of necessity attaching to the conduct commended by conscience as ideal and imperative. It merely indicates that the moral law can obtain satisfaction in no other way. Though it does not necessarily conflict with the desires, it keeps them in subordination to its own end, and sets them aside only when

they fail to conduce to the same object or purpose. Hence it *may* be opposed to them, though not always. It is the element which gives moral quality to the act, while the other elements serve more as guides to the right choice of ends. They insure knowledge and feeling of what is right, the sense of the imperative exercises more motive efficiency in the firmness of its demand upon the will. It is most distinctly the moral as compared with the intellectual element of conscience and lies very closely to the will in its function and importance.

**3d. The Desiderative Element.**—The element of conscience which comes nearest to containing the will, and which certainly interpenetrates its functions, is the desiderative or element of desire. It is very closely related to the legislative. Indeed, the two merge into each other. But the desiderative function is not distinctly marked by constraint and excludes all conscious conflict with lower desires. It represents an ideal which conflicts with the exclusive gratification of such desires as avarice, voluptuousness, lust, inordinate appetites, selfish ambition, etc., but it does not feel their competition. In this relation and function it is itself a predominant desire sanctified and transfigured by a tone of solemnity and self-consciousness which gives it all the force of a command, and indeed often involves it. It takes the various forms of *reverence*, *conscientiousness*, and *good-will*; of reverence when it is religious, or respect for *God*, of conscientiousness when it is respect for *law* or virtue, and of good-will when it is respect for *man*. This element of conscience expresses less constraint, or may even be devoid of it, than unconditional obligation, but only because it does not imply a conflict with competing inclinations. It therefore represents the highest development of conscience, and represents the feeling of what is imperative without the temptations which constraint has to overcome. It is illustrated in the person who does his duty because he loves it, and who does not desire any other course of action. This aspect of conscience only needs enlightenment in order to secure freedom from error, while duty in competition with desire and interest requires strength in addition to enlightenment.

The various elements recognized in this analysis of conscience show that it is a very complex organ as defined in the present treatise. Every one is, of course, at liberty to limit it to any one of the elements, but in so doing he should not quarrel with common sense and usage which has made no attempt to confine its application. If any contradiction be asserted of it after so limiting the term, it is a contradiction of the philosopher's own making, because he has arbitrarily chosen to give it a restricted application, and then imagined that some other usage of common life reflects an inconsistency, when the fact is that the conception is a general one, including many elements. No doubt it would conduce to philosophic simplicity if we could adopt but a single conception for the term; but while this might eliminate some questions connected with conscience in common life, it would only create the need of other terms to denote either our moral nature as a whole or the various elements composing it. But it seems best to the present author to use the term to express the whole of our moral functions, except the initiative acts or choice and volition, and in this way we can best comprehend the doctrine of evolution, and reconcile the many controversies that in reality center about different instead of the same meanings of the term. If conscience can be a comprehensive term for several elements and functions of moral consciousness, it affords a point of indifference for all the questions involved in traditional discussions, while it permits the separation of individual problems from a connection which it is wrong to suppose they possess. With this fact in view we can take up some of these problems under the functions of conscience.

IV. *THE FUNCTIONS OF CONSCIENCE.*—By the functions of conscience, as distinct from its elements, we mean what it *does* rather than what it *is* in life. The two facts are closely related, but this topic intends to express what it does as a *whole*, rather than what any of its specific elements may do. Each one of these elements will have its own psychological and moral function or influence, but will not represent the faculty as a whole. We have now to see what conscience, as the sum or complex of

these elements, effects for the organization of conduct in the direction of morality. We shall recognize three functions, namely, *motivation*, *authority*, and *moralization*.

**1st. Motivation.**—The fact that conscience may furnish a motive to the will has already been indicated in the discussion about motives. We require at present simply to examine the oft-discussed relation between conscience and desire, as motives to volition. We accept as admitted the fact that conscience can move the will, or is a capacity which indicates the direction of volition when that capacity is properly active. But it is a question whether its motivation is opposed to or independent of desire. Many conceive conscience as in conflict with natural desire, and thus set it up as the only process of moral motivation, and more distinctly imply or assert that moral action can occur only when there is the sense of conflict or struggle with natural impulses. Others, again, hold that conscience cannot be stronger than desire.

There are several differences between the two which should always be kept in mind. First, desire is indifferent to either the good or the bad; it may include both good and bad inclinations. It expresses only inclination for an object, and does not distinguish the kind of inclination. Thus it is a name for the love of vice, of ambition, of wealth, of power, of goodness, and of any craving whatever which is a natural prompting of the individual. On the other hand, conscience is not indifferent to the distinction between right and wrong. It means always to express a direction of the mind toward the good, whether it is successful in attaining it or not. In the second place, desire is a name for spontaneous cravings, as opposed to the deliberative and self-conscious activity of conscience. Desire is called natural in that it is supposed to be an organic craving for some satisfaction, and its object has usually been regarded as pleasure, while conscience is treated as moral and with virtue as its object. The third difference is found in the limitation of desire to the lower organic impulses which arise in consciousness without any purposive effort, while conscience, with its deliberative and self-conscious action, is distinguished by rational consciousness of its end, and

desire primarily is not, though we afterward become conscious of the meaning that its cravings express, and at once associate it with their occurrence.

It is important always to take these differences of import and implication into account when discussing their relation, but we should not confuse them with the idea of their opposition. Conscience is not in its nature opposed to desire at large. It is opposed only to the wicked desires as good is opposed to bad. It represents itself an inclination, or the conscious want and demand for a good of some kind, even when it has to struggle with some other desire. In its character of a motive, therefore, it is desiderative in its nature, and the conflict between it and desire, which is so often made absolute, is nothing more than the conflict between good and bad desires, conscience being a name for the former. Moreover, in the contrast between lower and higher desires conscience is the name for the higher. But this is a difference in quality rather than in the function of motivation, so far as desire moves the will at all, and hence we are mainly concerned with this function. This is to say, that the distinction between them is *moral*, not *psychological*. It is well to remark also that the term desire is not always consistent in either common or philosophic usage. It sometimes denotes a natural or spontaneous craving of the organism, such as hunger, thirst, and sex, which, as a state of the body or mind, is not at first conscious of its object. Then again it denotes every conscious liking for an object and will include such promptings to action as voluptuousness, malice, love of wealth, of fame, of power, affection, parental, filial, and social, and every inclination that seeks some satisfaction in attaining an end. It is only the first of these that can in any way be opposed to conscience, which is not only conscious of its end, but is reflective and rational. But then such desires as the first class are not properly motives to volition at all, inasmuch as they can only give rise to reflex actions, until consciousness and purpose are superimposed upon them to discover and direct to the end to which they, as blind cravings, seem to point. But in the wider sense of conscious

desire, aware of its end, conscience is not opposed to it in principle. It is only a name for one class of such desires. In this wider application there can be as much conflict between desires as is supposed to exist between conscience and desire, and in fact conscience in this relation is but a name for the desire that should prevail. Thus we solve the vexed question about the relation between duty and interest, which are often supposed to be in irreconcilable antagonism. It assumes that virtue is not possible without feeling the sense of duty and its antagonism to prudence and interest. The fact is that the constraint of duty is the same as the constraint felt in the conflict between two desires, as between the love of wealth and the love of a spendthrift's pleasures, and hence, as constraint, can be felt as much in matters of prudence as in matters of virtue. The only difference is that duty expresses the constraint of the desires that are not morally indifferent in their nature. It is thus not opposed to interest of every kind, but may coincide with the interest of the highest kind, or with an end which may concern us as an interest if we would only see it so.

In its relation to the will, therefore, conscience is like desire of the conscious sort. It affords motivation and can differ from it only in the quality which it expresses and the right of superiority. It is simply a desire with the notion of reflection and control added to it in the interest of harmonious development, and the realization of an end higher than mere instinct or that which the love of unregulated pleasure might produce. The opposition exists only where the contrast between conscience and desire is defined to be that between irrational impulses and the conscious pursuit of ends under the sense of duty, and where desire is supposed to express organic and natural cravings as opposed to the constraint which controls them. But where desire expresses a conscious and developed inclination, an inclination reinforced and more or less rationalized by experience, as the desire of power for the sake of benefiting the public, or the desire of knowledge for the sake of personal usefulness, there is no difference between it and conscience that is worth considering, and so

it is often used to express the necessary antecedent of any volition, as indicating that we could not will to realize any object without *desiring* the result, even if the volition costs the mind a severe struggle with some special temptation. Conscience in that sense is a desire, though it may be reasonable to call it more at the same time. But it is not opposed to desire at large; it conflicts, if it conflicts at all, only with some other particular desire. This conclusion prepares us to discuss the authority of conscience as the second of its qualities or functions.

**2d. Authority.**—This characteristic is known as the right to supremacy among the springs of conduct. It does not mean that the sense of duty is in fact always the strongest in man, but that it ought to be, or has the right to the first place in the initiation of volition. We must appeal to it to know what is right and wrong, and to make the right effective against the competition of sin and vice. If the reflective character of conscience and the high sense of duty which it expresses cannot be called into service, implying the social rights of all persons in the world's order, we are left to the prey of a lot of unregulated impulses, and hence we require a common arbiter of the claims presented in that conflict. Conscience is the only power which can assume this function. The right to this supremacy is secured on either claim as to its character. If it is simply the highest desire it should have authority on that ground. If it be simply a name for the moral as opposed to immoral desires its legitimacy is established on that account. If, again, it be in conflict with all desire and represent the rational as opposed to the irrational, it may be weaker than its competitor, but it has the right of authority.

But in assigning conscience the attribute of supremacy and authority over all other influences affecting conduct we must not mistake its meaning. It is not an external power, which has the right to coerce the subject into obedience against his will, but is an internal source which is itself the expression of legitimacy and right rather than mere power. It is well to recall the origin of the term authority as applied to conscience in order to see

just what value it has in the economy of morals. We found it a contribution of the reaction against medieval thought where the individual was subject to the external authority of the church, which regulated his life and conduct without regard to the scruples of his own conscience. The subject possessed no liberty or right of private judgment in matters of morals. They were determined for him by an external authority which made his life merely one of passive obedience. It virtually exempted him from all personal responsibility for his actions. But whether it intended to do this or not, it certainly expressed the claim of an external power to authorize what a man should and should not do. Authority was thus the exertion of mere power to coerce other wills into obedience. It may have been associated with some legitimacy in the actual duties it imposed, but it made power the standard of right, denied the right of private judgment, and dispensed with the need of conscience everywhere except in the person of the head of the church. The Reformation reversed all this. It was the re-establishment of the rights of conscience and the need of an inner guide for the direction of each individual. But the habit of appealing to authority was strong enough to demand of the Protestant some equivalent of it, on the ground that men differed in their ideals and were depraved in their desires. His appeal was then made to the authority of revelation, with a secondary resort to conscience as the revelation of God in man. But when rationalism established its claims to recognition there was nothing left but to make conscience its own authority, the final court of appeal for the distinction between right and wrong. It was in this way that it became possessed of that attribute. But it is often forgotten that this transfer of authority from an external to an internal power deprives it of all the meaning and implications which it possessed before. Such a thing as determining the right apart from the consciousness of the individual upon whom it rests as a duty, and as coercion against the will and private judgment of the subject, is impossible. It makes the notion of authority either a mere metaphor or a synonym for legitimacy,



which latter it in fact usually is in modern parlance. Indeed, outside the uses of dogmatic religion which seeks an external authority in revelation for the judgments of conscience, or for the rules of life, there is no need for the notion of authority at all in any other sense than the final court of appeal for legitimacy and the right of supremacy. Any attempt to impart into it its old meaning is simply an abandonment of the need of conscience and a resort to arbitrary power for the guidance of the individual, and this is contrary to the whole intellectual and moral tendencies of modern times. The authority of conscience, therefore, can only mean for us that the sole guide to the right can be its deliverances instead of impulse, instinct, and personal interest. If it is a question as to what our duty is, as compared with the many claims made upon the will, conscience is the "authority," guide, or court of appeal. It is the inner source of legitimacy, and if man is depraved or fallible we must seek elsewhere for qualities that will avoid these defects. But if these qualities cannot be found, we have no resource but to rely upon the best authority we possess, and this is conscience. Its authority is not the right of something external to restrain, direct, and coerce the subject, but an inner power which consists with the subject's liberty and puts responsibility where it ought to rest.

But scholasticism and many modern theologians have insisted that conscience is a fallible guide, and that man needs some infallible authority to direct his life and conduct. In the mediæval period this was found in the church, and Protestantism transferred it from the church to the Bible, and rationalism to conscience. It was everywhere assumed that fallible man needed an infallible guide, and hence it was sought outside of him. But in saying that conscience is infallible, rationalism simply abandoned the dogmatic doctrine that man's nature was wholly fallible and found in it consciousness and conscience, to which it attached that attribute in response to the demand for such a guide to insure certitude, which was assumed to be necessary for obtaining obedience at all. By supposition a man will not act until he is certain that he is right or can attain his end,

and as conscience was asserted to be fallible by one party it could never be absolutely assured of the correctness of its judgments and the subject could not act for fear of doing wrong. This was the source of appeal to the church or to the Bible as an unfailing instrument of certitude. But giving up all confidence in these, the rationalist could only meet the demand for infallibility and certitude by placing them in conscience and facing the difficulties created by supposing an infallible authority to be possessed by a fallible agent.

The controversy on the subject has been hotly waged ever since. The religious interests have asserted the fallibility of conscience and supplemented it by the infallibility of an external authority, and the skeptic not being satisfied to accept either the beliefs of the theologian or the paradoxes of the rationalist has been content to deny the positions of both of them and to remain in doubt and incertitude about the whole question. Other writers, like Kant, flatly affirmed the infallibility of conscience and treated the belief to the contrary as an illusion. But it has not occurred to either party to test the question by reference to the various conceptions of conscience. This we may do.

Kant says that an erring conscience is a chimera. This view seems to flatly contradict such facts as the evident conscientiousness of the Hindu mother and the still more evident wrong of her act in casting her child in the Ganges, or the case of the man who claims conscientiously to murder some one in the interests of the world. Men supported slavery conscientiously, and there is scarcely a crime which has not sought its sanctification at the bar of conscience. Kant, therefore, seems to have asserted what no mind of common sense can admit, namely, that action according to the dictates of conscience can never be wrong. Nothing would seem clearer in such cases than the claim that we need some other guide than conscience to keep us from committing crimes under its sanction, and hence Kant's view has been the object of ridicule by all who have felt that approval and self-satisfaction obtained in this way were dangerous to mo-

rality. But criticism of this kind against Kant wholly mistakes his conception of conscience and that of those who agree with him, and it fails to see that his doctrine either does not apply to such illustrations as have been mentioned, or does not mean to supply the desideratum which is demanded in order to secure coincidence between conscientiousness and good conduct. Now, Kant's view of conscience did not include intellectual and moral judgment in it. Its sole contents were the "categorical imperative" or the sense of duty, and morality did not extend beyond the good-will. His conception of morality did not contain responsibility for the character of any results outside of the intention of the subject. It consisted only in the right motive. Any man who acted according to this did his full duty. Morality aims, Kant held, in entire consonance with the traditional principle of Christianity, at the regeneration of the will, and all that is needed for this is action according to the categorical imperative, which an ignorant man can do as well as the wise man. He was good, and did all that the moral law could demand of him, who obeyed the sense of duty whatever the consequences. We may not agree that this is the wholly correct view of the case, but if it be advanced we can judge of it only according to the standard of consistency, and Kant was perfectly consistent in asserting infallibility of conscience and limiting morality to motives. He may be wrong, both in his conception of morality and in supposing that infallibility is the correct description of a function whose sole character is emotional, but he cannot be impeached from the standpoint of a different conception of morality and of conscience. Hence he could say of the Hindu mother that she was quite as moral as one whose affection for her child made her revolt against taking its life; that the man who committed murder conscientiously was as good morally as the man who respected human life. Where morality is merely a matter of good-will or intentions the consequences are irrelevant to the case. Of course, so blank a statement will only reveal the defects of a doctrine which does so much violence to the common notion of morality, but it cannot be charged with inconsistency.

In Kant's view, conscience was purely an emotional function and was not intended to sanctify anything but the will or intention which it expressed, and hence the very definition of it, as the highest desire, or the power superior to desire, the name for the goodness of the mind's impulses, made it necessarily inerrant, if we may use that term. All action, *subjectively* considered, must be good, which conscience expresses or motivates. We can invariably trust it for being right as compared with non-conscientious motives, though the only righteousness which it covers is that of character.

But it is pertinent to remark that the term "infallibility" is not the proper one to describe an emotional function. It can describe nothing but an unfailingly correct connection between ideas and things. Thus my perception would be infallible if every time that it had a sensation of color it was correct as to the character of the substance from which it came. Again, I should be infallible if judgment as to the morrow's weather coincided with the fact of it when it came. A machine is infallible in the sense that it acts without variableness or shadow of turning. But the term is applied in this case probably only as a metaphor. It properly implies the correctness of judgment regarding the occurrence of events or the existence of facts beyond the production of the subject. Hence fallibility or infallibility can properly apply only to intellectual functions, and not to emotional, which are either mere reflexes of consciousness or are expressions of the character of the will. What is intended by Kant in describing conscience as infallible may be admitted, and this is the absolute reliance we can place upon it for satisfying the demands of the moral law, *subjectively* considered, namely, that we always act conscientiously, and that no other action can have moral character apart from its consequences. Or, put in another form, no *agent* can be moral who does not respect the law of conscientiousness, good-will, or the categorical imperative. Conscience may always be right in this sense and so be entitled to unfailing reliance as a guide to internal righteousness. But infallibility can be applied to

it only by sufferance and on condition that it does not mean what it denotes when applied to judgment.

But the very revolt of the mind against Kant's paradox is testimony to the fact that the general conception of conscience is broader than his and includes intellectual functions as well as emotional. The common notion of morality, as we have seen in analyzing it, includes both motives and consequences, subjective and objective elements, and makes it necessary to secure perfect uniformity of connection between the one and the other in order that any claim to infallibility may be sustained. But wherever intellectual functions are involved it is known that the mind is exposed to error both from illusions of perception and fallacies of reasoning, so that conscience, if it contains cognitive elements, must be exposed to error. As we have defined it, conscience contains just those elements which expose it to error and which are the elements most directly connected or concerned with objective facts. To be objectively correct in our conduct, to attain the good or results which constitute the goodness of the external order of the world, the conditions most conservative of human welfare and development, intellectual and moral judgment is required, which is quite distinct in its nature and qualifications from the sense of duty and good-will. It is liable to error, and must make that fallible of which it is a part. Hence wherever conscience is conceived as intellectual, or as containing intellectual elements, it must be admitted to be fallible.

But the criticism of this conclusion will always be that we cannot safely follow a guide which is so liable to error, and hence must require some infallible authority to secure correct conduct. All that it is necessary to say in reply to this claim is that it is not true. There is a natural temptation to make this claim, but it is one which is made nowhere except in speculative philosophy. Conscience is fallible, but it may be the only guide we have, and if it be not followed we must either be inert or without any qualities of virtue at all. If we cannot secure an infallible authority in a revelation or some qualified agents deputed for the purpose, we must be content to accept such

guidance as we have, whether fallible or infallible. Moreover, we do not demand infallibility of judgment in any other affairs of life and yet we act as promptly as we should with it, accepting the consequences of error and generally attaining a reasonable amount of success. We transact business and undertake all the various risks of life and yet never ask to have an infallible judgment before acting. Experience shows us that we are often enough correct to enable us to follow securely such guidance as we have, and though this may be fallible, action is not paralyzed by it. It is the same with conscience. It might be a great advantage to have its judgments free from error, so far as objective consequences beyond the ken of knowledge are concerned, but since its responsibilities do not extend beyond good-will and such consequences as experience reveals, it is not hindered from being a safe guide. Infallibility is not required in order either to insure action or to secure the first object of moral law, which is good-will or personal righteousness. Obedience to the emotional dictates of conscience attains this, and we may leave to insight, education, and experience the task of strengthening the judgment against error, responsibility for character being fulfilled by obedience to the moral law whatever the consequences beyond the ken of knowledge. Hence, while admitting the fallibility of conscience in its intellectual resources, we may insist upon the *inviolability* of its emotional functions. In fact, this is the quality we should properly attribute to it rather than infallibility. This last is neither true nor necessary, while inviolability is both, and expresses the impossibility of satisfying the claims of virtue until conscience as a categorical imperative is accepted and obeyed. We may without it do what is right in the same sense that a machine or an animal, or a merely prudent man, may do that which is objectively good, affecting the conditions of life; but it will not be morality of the highest sort, and in the subjective sense it will not be morality at all. Hence in the effort to attain virtue as an expression of the agent's moral character, conscience must be inviolable and its authority in that sense accepted beyond question. Had moralists presented

this as its quality rather than infallibility there would have been less dispute about its nature and relation to morality. It is necessary only to insist upon its supremacy in order to secure it the proper place in the direction of life, and we can then dismiss the question of its fallibility or infallibility as not being relevant to the issue. Supremacy and inviolability secure the quality that entitles it to the first place among the motives to conduct, and that is all that we should require of it. The next function of conscience which follows from this is moralization.

**3d. Moralization** —What is meant by this function of conscience has practically been indicated in the discussion immediately preceding. The only object in asserting the authority of conscience is to give the source from which truly moral conduct must come. Objective morality is, of course, not concerned with it except as experience and knowledge may extend the range of responsibility. But subjective morality is conditioned by the presence and exercise of conscience as the sense of right or of those characteristics supposed to determine the good-will. No agent can be moral without it. Not only can conscience serve to motivate volition as a competitor of other impulses, but it determines the quality of that volition. In other words, it moralizes conduct within the limits of knowledge and of the will. The individual who respects it reaches the highest degree of personal worth possible for him. He may be defective in the knowledge of circumstances and thus commit many grave errors. But he deserves all the credit of a good will and intentions, so that if anything be wanted to improve his conduct it must be supplied by education of the intellect and not by discipline of the will. It is the character of law and a fixed rule of action which it gives, while it enables us to place more reliance upon the person who possesses it. It is the principle which will make sacrifices for social order and resist the undue influences and temptations of environment to pursue self-interest, and in every way insures the highest ideals, so that wherever there are varied conditions to take account of, there must be either the constraint of duty or the reverence for a moral ideal in order to give conduct that

moral quality which Ethics seeks to explain and to encourage. Conscience is thus the primary condition of moralizing man, partly as the repository of principles which may counteract the influence of bad instincts and desires, and partly as the source of moral ideals that sanctify the will whether it is exposed to temptation or not. It is the conscientious man that approaches perfection, or serves as a personal embodiment of virtue, conscience being the faculty which conditions and moralizes the character of his life as ideal and divine. In other words, it is the transfiguring force in conduct, and determines all that is described by ethical merit.

*References.*—Mackenzie: *Manual of Ethics*, pp. 52-57; Muirhead: *Elements of Ethics*, pp. 70-78; Alexander: *Moral Order and Progress*, pp. 156-160; Fowler and Wilson: *Principles of Morals*, Vol. II., pp. 180-224, 274-285; Martineau: *Study of Religion*, Vol. II., Book II., Chapter II., Section 3; Seat of Authority in Religion, pp. 76-79; Calderwood: *Handbook of Moral Philosophy*, pp. 64-91 (Fourteenth Edition); Maurice: *On Conscience*; Leslie Stephen: *Science of Ethics*, Chapter VIII., pp. 311-352; Barratt: *Physical Ethics*, Part II., Chapter I., Section 1; Martensen: *Christian Ethics*, Vol. I., pp. 356-368; Smyth, *Christian Ethics*, Part II., Chapter I., pp. 293-326; Bain: *Emotions and the Will*; *The Emotions*, Chapter XV., pp. 268-293; Porter: *Elements of Moral Science*, pp. 243-259.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE ORIGIN OF CONSCIENCE.

*I. INTRODUCTORY.*—From the earliest period of philosophic reflection the question how we came to have moral ideas has been a disputed one. We found in the history of ethical problems that they were first referred to the gods and then to convention and afterward to reason. In modern times the theory of evolution took up the question with a new method and has almost absorbed ethical speculation in the enthusiasm of its method and discoveries. It has been usual since its introduction to try to determine the nature of conscience from its origin. But apart from the equivocal import of the term origin, which we shall note again, it is most important to keep in mind that the proper order of procedure is first to determine its nature and then to discuss its origin. If men could only be brought to see it, they would acknowledge that it is essentially absurd to investigate the origin of anything until they have decided its nature. It is probably assumed by most persons that the conception of conscience is clear and well understood. If this were so we might well proceed to discuss its origin. But the previous chapter shows very clearly that this assumption is an illusion and that every theory of its origin must take account of a very complex set of phenomena. We require, therefore, first to know exactly what it is whose origin we are seeking. Having determined that, we can proceed to the problem of evolution.

The method of procedure to be here adopted will involve a clear conception of the theories regarding the origin of conscience and a criticism of some current forms of evolution, which will be followed by an analysis of the proper conception of evolution. We shall first classify the theories regarding the way man came

to have such a faculty. We shall not distinguish at first the transcendental from the phenomenal use of the term, but shall find before reaching our conclusion that one set of theories applies to the former and the other to the latter conception of it. Let us see in how many ways the problem may be viewed.

II. CLASSIFICATION OF THEORIES.—There have been two general theories in regard to the origin or existence of conscience. One of them is called *Nativism* and the other *Empiricism*. The former opposes the latter as natural opposes acquired. The full meaning of each theory will be brought out by farther definition and analysis.

1st. *Nativism*.—In its broad sense this theory regards conscience as a natural endowment of man. It does not wholly exclude the idea that it had an origin, but it does not admit that it has originated by human experience. It holds that it is as old, or coeval with the creation of the individual; that it is as much a natural part of his constitution, organic or mental, as is his reason, his memory, or his emotions, although it may not give clear evidence of its existence until long after other faculties have manifested themselves. But it takes three forms—*Theism*, *Naturalism*, and *Intuitionism*.

1. *THEISM*.—This is the theory which holds that conscience has a divine origin, that it is divinely created. It is nativistic in holding that it is a part of man's nature as a whole, and is not produced by his experience. But it opposes every supposition that it is either eternal or a necessary part of intelligence or consciousness as such. It conceives that beings might exist without conscience. In fact, it originated with a view to explaining the difference between man and animals. Animals were admitted to have at least a certain measure of intelligence, and to that extent could not be distinguished in their nature from man. It was also apparent that man's moral nature presented a most striking difference between him and lower orders of existence. The religious mind everywhere seized upon the fact to prove that this additional factor in man could not have had what is called a natural, as opposed to a supernatural, origin, and hence made

this new and distinguishing quality a divinely implanted power. This view antagonized both the doctrine of conventionalism, as expounded by the Sophists, and the theory that it was a contingent product of experience in pleasure and pain. One of its main objects was to give a religious meaning to conscience, and to sustain the supernatural at the point where the character of the divine showed its highest degree of idealization. But it was also concerned to show that there was a divinely implanted power in man which makes all persons responsible for their conduct, while empiricism was supposed to be inconsistent with that idea, on the ground that experience was not the same in all individuals, and so could not give rise to the same capacity.

2. NATURALISM.—By this theory we mean simply that conscience is a strictly natural, as opposed to a supernatural, endowment of man. It regards the faculty as original, but does not accord it any particular derivation different from other faculties. It is not inconsistent with theism in all its aspects, but only in the one respect, that it does not appeal to miracles to explain conscience, unless it appeals to them to account for everything, which is in effect the abandonment of the supernatural altogether. This doctrine has not been widely held. It merely represents the attitude of mind which would not agree with empiricism, on the one hand, nor accept the miraculous or occasional interference of deity in the course of things, on the other.

3. INTUITIONISM.—This theory is consistent with both of the others, and is only opposed to empiricism. Its fundamental characteristic is that moral ideas are known directly and immediately, and not by the slow and precarious process of experience. It is important to remark, however, that it does not concern conscience *transcendentally*; that is, as a capacity, but *phenomenally*; that is, as actual conceptions. It may assume either the theistic or the naturalistic point of view in regard to conscience as an endowment, but in regard to the ideas of right and wrong, it asserts that they are universal elements of rational consciousness, and can be immediately known and perceived by all persons possessing it.

The theory takes two different forms, which I shall call *General Intuitionism* and *Particular Intuitionism*.

(a) *General Intuitionism*.—This view holds that the only element of moral consciousness which is immediately and universally known is the mere distinction between right and wrong; that is, *the consciousness of moral imperatives*, or the general and abstract conception of morality. Not that we are originally conscious that this conception is abstract and general, but only of an idea which is general and abstract. We must not misunderstand the theory at the outset. It pretends only to assert an original basis upon which experience may work, and it finds moral conceptions not only so universal, but appearing so early in the life of the individual that it would account for them by supposing an intuitive tendency of consciousness to make the distinction between right and wrong too early for experience to account for it.

(b) *Particular Intuitionism*.—This theory goes farther, and maintains that man can intuitively know what *particular* acts are right or wrong, agree or disagree with the standard of morality. That is, it asserts not only that he has a natural knowledge of moral distinctions in general, the moral as distinguished from the true or the beautiful, but that he has the same knowledge of the character of the particular virtues and vices, namely, murder, theft, adultery, honesty, charity, veracity, respect for human life, justice, benevolence, etc. This practically leaves no room for the influence of experience in any form, and is the most exaggerated form of nativism that is possible.

**2d. Empiricism.**—This theory is based upon experience. The name is taken from the Greek term *ἐμπειρία*, which means experience. But we must remark the ambiguity of the term in modern usage. First, it means the realization in consciousness of any fact whatever, as to have a sensation, to feel a pain, to suffer an accident, to perceive an object, or to have any mental state or occurrence whatever. The second meaning is quite different from the first. It denotes a series of events in consciousness, with an increment at the end which was not

found in the beginning. This was the old Greek meaning of the term. It implied repetition with the conception of a result when looking at the whole which would not be suggested by the first incident realized. The two conceptions, therefore, are, first, of *isolated individual* events, and second, of a *collective series* of events in consciousness, the former having the *whole contents* of the thing derived in each event, and the latter with an *increment not contained in the original element of the series*. The latter is the only meaning that can oppose the theory to Intuitionism or Nativism. Hence empiricism as a theory denotes the derivation of ideas and powers from elements each of which do not contain the product as a whole. It is even conceived as denoting the origin of something from that which does not contain it, which is a bolder form of statement than the one we have given. But usually it is defined as the theory which derives conscience and all our abstract conceptions from experience or by experience. Thus our conception of the sin of lying, of cheating, of murder, of stealing, of cruelty, or of the virtues of honesty, of justice, of truthfulness, etc., is not known by the individual until he has been educated to it in some way either by the influence of social discipline or by the more formal process of instruction. He requires gradually to learn their character and relation to social welfare. This experience, however, has been supposed to be of two kinds, the experience of the *individual* and the experience of the *race*. This gives rise to two distinct forms of the theory, which we shall call *Experientialism* and *Evolutionism*.

1. **EXPERIENTIALISM.**—This theory limits the development of conscience to the experience of the individual who has moral capacity, the experience of others not being supposed to count for anything in his endowments. The individual man as we know him is supposed to start in life perfectly indifferent to moral distinctions and with no inherent moral conceptions whatever and no tendency whatever to appreciate them, but must learn them by contact with social life and by the various forms of education. It is to be remarked, however, that historically

this theory has been almost wholly confined to the *phenomenal* conception of conscience. It has not discussed the question of capacities in any metaphysical sense, but only the existence of positive moral ideas. Hence it is supposed to explain the origin of conceptions, not of faculties.

2. EVOLUTIONISM.—This theory holds that conscience is the result of a process of development, but does not limit the process to the life or experience of the individual. It extends this experience to the race. It admits that conscience is native or an inborn capacity in the rational man of to-day, but holds that it was not true of the earliest ancestors from whom the present generations have descended. It supposes that earlier individuals accumulated a certain amount of experience and moral knowledge, the result of which as a habit or acquired capacity was handed down by inheritance to the successors of that individual. What was due to direct experience in the ancestor was an inherited capacity by posterity and so is natural in the latter rather than acquired. Experience again added to this endowment and was handed on in the shape of higher powers in the next generation. Natural selection was added to this influence to eliminate those who did not acquire or possess the desideratum of conscience and to secure the survival of those who did possess a qualification so necessary to the social organism. The gradual selection of the best developed individuals of the species secured the fixity of conscience in the race and multiplied the tendencies to development in the direction of perfecting moral consciousness. It therefore hastened the attainment of the existing condition of things.

It should be remarked in this theory, however, that it accounts for more than the origin of the specific moral ideas which the experience of the individual determines. It also undertakes to account for conscience as a capacity, and therefore explains its genesis in the *transcendental* sense. It uses the result of experience as not being wholly lost with the death of the individual, but passed on as an inherited tendency to subsequent generations, appearing there as natural

when it was purely an acquired habit in the ancestors. Individual experience in this theory counts for nothing except the subject's habits, which appear as predispositions in the next and following generation, where it represents capacity of a certain degree, more easily developed and with the momentum of that from which it came. Hence while the theory admits the native character of conscience in the rational man of to-day, experience is yet the basis of it, being distributed over an indefinite period of time and beginning with individuals that possess no traces of the faculty, representing as it does now the accumulated results of so many generations.

The following table will summarize the classification of the theories on the origin of conscience, as they have already been defined. They are not all of them mutually exclusive in all their aspects. They oppose each other only in certain particulars.

Theories	Nativism	Theism	
		Naturalism	
		Intuitionism	{ General Particular
	Empiricism	Experientialism	{ General Particular
		Evolutionism	

**III. EXAMINATION OF NATIVISTIC THEORIES.**—The three theories grouped under this general heading have both their merits and demerits. As already remarked, they are not mutually exclusive in all of their characteristics and associations, but have represented merely slight differences of points of view in the development of ethical speculation, each one being designed to effect a certain purpose in the age in which it arose. Some of them may be dismissed very briefly.

**1st. The Theistic Theory.**—This theory had its use in the controversy with Greek philosophy and received a new impetus in the controversy with evolution. It was designed to sustain and vindicate the supernatural in the order of the world, and to establish a basis of divine authority for morals. Greek philosophy endeavored to explain all phenomena, both of the natural

and the moral order, without an appeal to a personal deity as understood by the early Christians, and the consequence was that the distinction between man and animals was not drawn in the interest of a doctrine which ascribed an immortal soul to one and denied it of the other. But the manifest difference of moral capacity between them offered an opportunity both to seek an explanation outside the natural order for so peculiar a phenomenon and to prove the personal character of the being from whom man's moral nature originated, while at the same time establishing a principle of authority which was presumably a necessity for social order. We shall briefly summarize the characteristics which were involved in the position thus taken and their relation to the wants of ethical theory. These will include both the merits and defects of the doctrine.

1. The theory of theism proves both too much and too little. In maintaining that conscience must have a divine origin on the ground that there are no traces of it in the lower order of nature, the theist must hold either that this nature is not a creation of the divine, or that if it is so created there is no ethical advantage in the theory. To admit the existence of everything else without the interposition of the supernatural is to create a strong presumption against an exception and in favor of further attempts to reduce the phenomenon to the natural order. If all but one event in the world's history be natural, it will require some hardihood to demand an exception to the law of parsimony, which requires as few causes as possible for the explanation of things, and ultimately but one of them to accord with the unity of the world. Hence the supernatural theory of conscience must be at the expense of the divine elsewhere in the economy of the world, unless we make everything supernatural and due to the same cause. On the other hand, to make everything supernatural and divine is to eliminate the whole effect of the supposed authority of conscience by giving the natural equal weight and importance in the order of things with the divine. This is not a refutation of theism, but only a statement to show that it does not solve the problem as scientific ethics would have



it solved. Ultimately we must trace all phenomena to the same cause to account for their existence and with them that of conscience. But it is not the explanation of the existence or genesis of conscience that gives it its validity and authority. These qualities must be derived from what it is, not from the manner of its origin. Theism pretends only to explain how man obtained a moral nature, and not the derivation of its character and supremacy. Hence it does not effect what is demanded of a theory, though it may be true.

2. A second difficulty of the theistic doctrine of the origin of conscience is that it shifts the whole problem over to theology. Theism must assume the existence of God as given in order to refer conscience to His creative power. If it does not assume this fact, either it must surrender the right to use the principle for the purposes of explanation, for the reason that we cannot rationally resort to causes whose existence is not yet admitted, or it must shift the controversy over to the theological question of God's existence, and this would make all ethics wait upon the issues of theology, which seem less near a solution than ethics, and would discourage the attempt to get a practical basis for the authority of conscience until the skeptic could be converted to theology. On the other hand, if the theist means only that conscience is the revelation of God's existence and character, it is to be remarked that whatever relation God must sustain to conscience as creator, this faculty must first be accepted and its authority granted before its testimony can be admitted, and this is to make its value independent of every question of its origin. In any case, therefore, the theistic theory, whether true or not, is irrelevant to the issue raised by ethics, which is the ground of morality rather than the origin of the function of it.

3. In spite of the conclusion just announced the question of genesis comes up in ethical speculation. But it is the genesis of the mental phenomena which are the expression of conscience rather than the faculty of them. Now, the utmost that the theistic theory has ever claimed to do was to explain the creation of conscience in the *transcendental* sense; it has not in-

tended to explain conscience *phenomenally*; that is, to assign the cause or causes of the particular phenomena, cognitive, legislative, and judicial, whose domination of life has given them together the name of conscience. It has gone no further than to explain how man can possess this qualification when it is supposed that animal existence is without it and without the germs of it. But the real problem of ethics is the influences which have given rise to the persistency and predominance of moral consciousness in the economy of rational life, and these can be sought, though they may be secondary causes, without either assuming or denying theism. A direct appeal to a supernatural origin for them as mental states would prove more than theism either desires or needs to prove. It is the condition or conditions of conscience as a phenomenon that scientific ethics seeks to establish. Theism has not aimed to do this, but it does not conflict with this object and hence will be irrelevant to the real issue.\*

4. A fact which has done much to invite opposition to the theistic theory has been its association with the attempt to estab-

\* If it be said that theism is in conflict with evolution on the ground that both theories aim to explain the origin of conscience in the *transcendental* sense it can be replied that this will depend wholly upon the retention and the legitimacy of the distinction between the natural and the supernatural. Theism is supposed to depend wholly upon the supernatural and evolution upon the natural. But for philosophic purposes I must deny the legitimacy of the distinction unless it is made to coincide with that between subject and phenomena, in which there is no conflict, but only a difference. Moreover, apart from this no distinction can be assigned between them that has any importance for the philosophic question, because in explaining the *origin* of anything the "natural" can only be the *continuous* or *regular* action of that which the notion of the "supernatural" makes only *occasional*. The nature of the force must be the same. Hence in refusing to recognize any distinction of character between the "natural" and "supernatural" we simply indicate that theism and evolution may either be two sides of the same shield or one is only a doctrine of *creatio occasionalis* and the other of *creatio continua*. This distinction may be an interesting one, but it has no importance for ethics because the nature of the agency in both cases must be the same. It is only a question of its law.

lish an external authority for the deliverances of conscience. This view might satisfy an age when individual liberty and the right of private judgment were denied, but whenever these came to be affirmed the philosophic aspects of the theory would naturally pay the penalty of its practical weakness. Hence since the Protestant Reformation the importance of the theory has diminished everywhere except under conditions in which the value of external authority was still retained as a counter-agent to the irresponsibilities of ignorance and impulse. The general revolt against the principle of authority has carried with it a marked diminution in the power and influence of the theistic theory, while showing also that ethics is less interested in the origin than the character of conscience.

5. There is another fact of some interest. Whatever criticisms may be made against certain features of theism it has the very great merit of being associated usually with very high ideals of duty and of God. In fact the theory has done much to idealize either our conception of conscience or our conception of God. Some would say that the moral nature of God is only a reflection of the particular age that placed a high value upon conscience, God being given no other character than power as long as the idea of authority prevailed. Others would say that conscience derived its ideal and moral character from the divine agent who created it.\* But without dwelling on the differences between these two modes of thought it remains true that the theory has the merit of being associated with that sense of the idealization and sanctity of conscience which gave it more power in the economy of individual life than if it had been reduced to the lower level of irrational desires.

**2d. Naturalism.**—This theory has many of the defects of the

\*There is no necessary contradiction between these two points of view. The character of conscience may be the *evidence* (ratio cognoscendi) of God's nature, while God's nature may be the *cause* (ratio fiendi) of the character of conscience. Hence the morality of conscience may be the means of our knowing what God is, while he may be the cause of what conscience is in its character.

theistic view. Indeed it is only the obverse side of the same doctrine and provokes the same controversies, while it is perhaps quite as irrelevant to the real issues of ethics. It has also the obverse merit of theism. It has been more distinctly associated with the idea of individual liberty, responsibility, and the right of private judgment, and so with the notion of only an internal authority over conduct.

**3d. Intuitionism.**—As has already been stated this theory concerns the origin of moral *ideas* rather than the origin of moral *faculty*. It is therefore wholly unrelated to the *transcendental* conception of conscience. But its meaning is not clear in its application to the phenomenal conception. It is generally supposed to be opposed to every form of empiricism. But this assumption will hardly bear investigation, as the equivocations of the term will show. It is true that in some of its meanings it is opposed to the empirical theory, but not in all of them. Hence before discussing the theory directly, we should clearly understand the various meanings of the term.

1. MEANING OF THE TERM INTUITION.—There are at least three distinct significations of this term bearing upon the controversy at hand. They are (a) immediate cognition, (b) necessary cognition, and (c) universal cognition. The first of these denotes simply directness of perception, or direct consciousness of a fact without the accompaniment of repeated experiences to prove or confirm an impression. Thus I intuitively perceive my sensations in the sense that I do not need to repeat an experiment with them in order to know that they are mine. Again, I intuitively perceive that two and two make four in the sense that when I do perceive or suspect the fact at all, I do not require to have the phenomenon repeated over and over again in order to be convinced of its truth. In this sense of the term, it is identical with the first meaning of "experience," which is *realization in consciousness as a fact of consciousness*. This conception of it has no implications whatever about the time in the life of the individual when the act of perception may occur, nor does it involve any theory about the way the intuitive power

came into existence. It may be natural or acquired. In either case its function is supposed to be one of *immediate insight* when it acts.

The second meaning of the term implies that an intuitive truth must *necessarily* be known or assumed by all rational beings. Hence to assert that right and wrong are necessary cognitions means that they must be known by every being who is sane at all, and that we should have to eliminate the reason or consciousness of such beings in order to expel their knowledge of moral conceptions or their capacity for them.

The third meaning of the term is that intuitive truths are cognized as a fact by all rational beings. It does not involve the necessity of such knowledge, but only the fact that it is universal. It is taken to imply that the capacity for such perception is an inborn function of the subject. Thus intuitive moral perceptions would be the universal recognition of the character of murder, theft, disobedience of conscience, ingratitude, cruelty, etc., or the possession of general moral ideas, a sense of right and wrong somewhere, if only of the most primitive kind, as resistance to injury, love of parents, etc. They are called intuitive because all men are supposed to be able to have such knowledge.

Now, intuitionism, as a theory of conscience or of moral ideas, implies the *simultaneous possession of all three forms of cognition as necessary to its purposes*, namely, that moral distinctions, either general or particular, must be immediate, universal, and necessary. It is a peculiarity of mental processes that they may be immediate without being either universal or necessary, and necessary without being immediate and universal without being either immediate or necessary. If they are necessary, however, they must be universal. All this will be apparent to the most superficial. But the test of an intuitive truth has been that it should have all three qualifications. The importance of this to the theory will be evident from the object of the theory itself.

## 2. THE OBJECT OR MOTIVE OF INTUITIONALISM.—The funda-

mental object of this theory, without which the doctrine would never have been proposed, was *to supply a basis for universal responsibility*. We have already seen that at least the capacity for moral distinctions is necessary before any degree of responsibility whatever can be admitted, and that the actual consciousness of the distinction will affect the degree of responsibility, and that a man is exempt from punishment or discipline in proportion to the absence of the actual consciousness of wrong in his conduct. In order, therefore, to justify the application of responsibility to all persons alike, it had to be assumed that they were capable of moral conceptions. Conscience had thus to be made universal and necessary as a condition of amenability to rewards and punishment. It was therefore only natural to make its actual knowledge all that could be attributed to inherent and inborn capacities; namely, intuitive, universal, and necessary cognition. Otherwise morality and responsibility would have to be sacrificed to the same extent to which these qualities were sacrificed, and as the age which originated the doctrine was very strict in its application of equal responsibility, its theory was very stanchly defended, and for the sake of social order men were very chary about admitting any limitations to it. This is the secret of the strong antagonism to empiricism which breaks down the very principle of *universal* responsibility and can admit it only where conscience happens to have been developed. In the light, therefore, both of this fact and the definition of the term we may examine the two theories.

3. GENERAL INTUITIONALISM.—As defined this theory holds that the principle of moral distinctions is known before the full measure of its application to particular acts is known and even conditions the possibility of such an application. For instance, in order to know that a particular act is murder the subject must know what murder is, and to know the sin of murder he must know how it affects the welfare of others. To know that stealing is wrong he must have a notion of the sacredness of property, and this he will obtain from the native sense of possession or right to one's own product and labor. In short, to judge of

the character of any particular act whatever, the individual must have a prior conception of that which determines its character, and the particular act must be that which determines the nature of other events which are causally connected with it. Now, the difficulty of proving that men have any such prior consciousness of the ultimate principle of right and wrong grows out of two facts: (a) the possibility that some one of the three necessary qualifications of intuitive truth may be wanting, and (b) the fact that the doctrine of intuitionism has not always made it clear whether by intuitive ideas it meant *implicit* or *explicit* knowledge; that is, consciousness of a fact which is moral, or the consciousness *that* it is moral.

(a) In regard to the first of these difficulties it is easy to indicate so many differences of opinion respecting morality among men, and so many cases where the very conception of morality as accepted by rational men is or seems to be wanting, that the universality and therefore the necessity of moral distinctions would seem to be justifiably denied. Savages do not revolt against cruelty, chastity seems not to be known in some stages of culture, lying is a qualification to be cultivated by some people, and actions generally are only the pursuit of personal interest in which it is supposed that morality is not latent. These and thousands of similar illustrations might be adduced to show that there is no single conception of morality common to mankind and that the sense of duty, the fundamental characteristic of conscience, is wanting.

The first reply to this argument would be that it is not necessary for the intuitive character of moral principles that they everywhere take the same concrete form; cruelty, unchastity, and injustice might be very common, not from the lack of any conception of right and wrong, but only from the lack of perceiving that certain known ideas are applicable to the case at hand. The germ of morality may be recognized in some case, but not its application to another. For instance, regard for the welfare of the tribe may be known and appreciated, and yet neither chastity nor justice may be recognized

toward those not in the tribe. Indeed, there are instances where even chastity is respected within certain limits and not in others. This is even true in modern times. A man may insist upon the chastity of his own household, and yet not regard it himself in the person of others. This is a contradiction, but it does not disprove his consciousness of moral distinctions. It only shows that he is not consistent in the application of them. A man may know and respect a thing which has the qualities—that is, the *intension*—of morality, but neither recognize them as such nor their application to other concrete cases; that is, their *extension*. A man may feel a constraint to defend the tribe, his family, or the state, and yet not perceive that this duty, with its implied respect for the individuals of the family or community, involves a great many other virtues. It is this extension of a given law to particular cases which has to be learned by experience, but this fact does not involve the use of experience for the principle itself. And it is to be remarked that some forms of empiricism are even based upon the assumption of a general consciousness which makes possible the development of common conceptions by experience. Of this more again. At present it suffices to note the fact as proof of the general principle of intuitionism.

A second fact in the same direction is that intuitionists have only claimed that their doctrine applies to *rational* beings, in whom they could evidently find traces of immediate and universal conceptions of right and wrong. But it is a manifest weakness of the theory that it has no criterion of rationality to determine where and when the line shall be drawn between rational and irrational members of the human race. This is to say that its conception of man is broader than that of *rational* man, and the empiricist might well admit the fact and use it in his own favor.

A third reply to the empiricist's argument would be that all men do recognize the value of pleasure and the evil of pain, and that this is the basis of moral distinctions. This reply must have great force with the utilitarian, who asserts both that all



men draw this distinction instinctively and that pleasure is the highest good and pain the ultimate evil. To say that pleasure is the highest good implies either that it must be intuitively known or that utilitarianism is not true. If the goodness of pleasure is not a native perception, it must be acquired by experience, which would make it improbable that all men would have the same idea of it, since their experience varies and the utilitarian principle is broken down on that side. On the other, if it is not the highest good the doctrine is again abandoned. Hence as long as utilitarians, and empiricists, who are invariably utilitarians, maintain both that pleasure is universal and that it is the highest good, they must admit the intuitive, universal, and necessary character of something which conditions the application of their own theory of morality and the development of conscience. When they resolve morality into the pursuit of pleasure and make this an organic element of consciousness, they admit the whole method of intuitionism, though they may not admit the object of it.

It is a fact that intuitionism has often made some other end than pleasure the ultimate object of volition, but this is neither a necessary part of its method nor a universal accompaniment of the theory. The æsthetic school of morality admitted a moral sense though making its object happiness or pleasure. Happiness is not the exclusive property of the empiricist. All that intuitionism ultimately requires is some such universal object of volition which conditions survival in order to maintain that the fundamental distinction of morality is innate or natural as opposed to what is acquired. In that case empirical morality is only a more highly developed pursuit of this object, whose relation to the particular virtues is lost by the process of abstraction which goes on in the formation of all complex ideas.

It can be farther said, also, that a conception of moral obligation is actually more general than the empiricists admit and than their theory will permit them to concede. In savage tribes, notably among the Indians of this continent, whose social life is as simple as it can well be, we often find a sense of right

as clear and distinct as among the most highly civilized. The Egyptian who showed distinct signs of gratitude when his life was spared by his English captors, though he had never seen such clemency before, manifested a consciousness of nobility which has very great possibilities in it. The Indian's fidelity to his promises and the revenge he takes for the infractions of treaties with him, though they may show great callousness of heart in regard to cruelty, are proof of a clear knowledge of what is right in one relation. The Australian savage whose desire to kill was so strong that he could not walk behind a stranger without an almost irresistible temptation to slay him, and who asked to walk in front of him in order to quell the desire, showed as clear a sense of right and wrong as any one could be expected to have. Thousands of similar illustrations might be chosen to the same effect. They show the existence of moral consciousness where it is least to be expected, though the instances may be so casual as to render the detection of it very rare and difficult. The general habits of the individual do not regard the distinction, and we imagine it and the capacity for it wholly absent, when it is merely latent and ineffective. The trouble with the savage may not be the absence of all ideas of right and wrong, but only their inefficiency among the temptations of personal interest. But we should not deny their existence on the ground that they are not supreme. In fact it is the assumption that savages are redeemable, to some extent at least, and that under experience, discipline, and education they may learn moral habits, which justifies all efforts to accomplish this result. Such attempts would be very foolish if the assumption were not true. Development and experience assume that a recognized principle is given and that it is the business of these processes to *extend*, not to *create*, it. Hence we must not confuse the inefficiency of moral principles with their absence. On the other hand, intuitionists require to be warned against assuming more than is true and more than is necessary for their method. They require only enough to condition a certain amount of responsibility, and not the equality which scholasticism taught

and which is still the echo of intuitive doctrine. But its general principle is not only not opposed to some forms of empiricism, but is the condition of them, in that a common experience is not possible without a common consciousness of some kind.

(b) In regard to the second difficulty, which was that the theory did not make clear always, whether the intuitive ideas which it claimed were implicit or explicit, it must be said that the fact is a source of weakness. We shall grant also that if intuitionism is conditioned upon the explicit consciousness of morality as such, even of the most general form, it cannot be sustained. Experience is the only influence which can develop this aspect of moral consciousness. But when the theory is properly understood and explained, it affirms only the implicit consciousness of morality as ultimate and intuitive; that is, the consciousness of a fact which is imperative before the consciousness that it is an imperative fact of a moral order. Thus the savage even may feel a constraint to defend the social order of his tribe, and it may be a moral duty to do so, though he has not yet formed an abstract conception of this obligation. This "unconscious" morality, as it is often called, meaning morality of the unreflective non-self-conscious form, is the primitive stage of all highly developed and conscious morality, and in fact conditions it. There will be found in it often all the elements of the mature conscience, though so distorted and misdirected as to make them unrecognizable. Thus the savage whose wife had died, and who pined away for a year or more from remorse at not having killed some woman according to the law of his tribe, and returned to his master after a year's absence, hearty, hale, and happy, after effecting the murder of a woman in a distant tribe, showed as much conscience as the civilized man, though it was terribly distorted. It is not the correctness of the object which makes conscience, but the presence of the mental elements we have described. Conscience may be badly educated, but the worst distortions of its functions *do not disprove its existence, but only its infallibility*. Hence the worst specimens of mankind may have it with its moral distinctions implicit in their

consciousness, though not developed to its full extent or properly enlightened in regard to its application to human life. If intuitionism bases itself upon this fact it may be a tenable theory, or at least it may have the merits of a working hypothesis, and by acting upon it we shall generally see that wisdom is justified of her children. Speaking of the most degenerate and unpromising, one writer says: "How are we to see their good possibilities if there are no signs of them or none that we can see? Well, it is our business to look till we do see, to search till we find. But, for practical guidance in case of despair, I would suggest the rule, even when there are no signs of goodness or ability, still believe in both; no one is so hopelessly bad or hopelessly stupid that your faith will not prove in itself a cause of cure. The rational conviction left in my mind, indeed, after some experience of success and of failure, is that, so far as my knowledge of means of influence go, this simple practical faith in every individual's worth, and in one's power of bringing that worth to light, is best of all." This, of course, is but the popular statement of a belief that turns out true, to some extent at least, whenever tried, and confirms the assumption both of latent capacities and of recognized principles upon which morality can be developed. Intuitionism explains that assumption and serves as the basis of that responsibility or degree of it which every moralist, whether an empiricist or not, must assume, or wholly abandon morality and its demands upon the individual members of society. Experience can do absolutely nothing to develop a common moral consciousness unless there is a common principle to work upon, and hence general intuitionism must be accepted as a condition of giving any meaning to the empiricist's conclusion about a common morality, though the theory must be based upon the implicit rather than the explicit knowledge of moral conceptions.

4. PARTICULAR INTUITIONISM.—This form of the theory maintains that we intuitively know the character of the particular virtues and vices, such as murder, theft, cruelty, injustice, honesty, purity, veracity, etc. This is to say, that we should

know the sin of cruelty without any experience, but immediately when a case of it is brought to our notice; that we should recognize the virtue of veracity without being told it. This, however, is an exaggerated form of the theory, which, we admit, cannot be maintained for a moment. The particular virtues and vices are nothing more than means to ends, causes of effects, and no human mind can tell by *a priori* processes the particular causes of an effect. Man must await the judgment of experience, though the principle of cause and effect be *a priori* and intuitive. For example, cruelty is a particular act which produces pain to some other person. We can only tell by experience that such an act causes pain and that it will always do so. There is no way to tell the fact *a priori*. The same is true of all the actions which represent the special virtues and vices. We only learn by experience that they are means to ends, and for all that we know to the contrary the same actions might have produced pleasure until we learn their nature by observation and frequent experience. Moreover, it is conclusive against this form of the theory that there is no such uniformity of belief and knowledge regarding special actions as must follow the supposition of that doctrine. Nothing is clearer than the fact that some men do not know the duty of chastity; children are slow to learn what cruelty is; savages are ignorant of many of the virtues even when conscience may be clear as to one or two of them. In short, the differences of civilization, culture, opinion, and practice, the world over and in all ages of history, make it impossible to suppose that men are equally informed as to the extent of their duties, without supposing an inefficiency in those duties, which is highly improbable. Hence in the present writer's opinion, however desirable it might be to have a greater uniformity of insight into the specific virtues, if only in the interests of a theory which conditions the higher degrees of responsibility, it is a fact that it cannot be borne out by observation and experience, and it only results in inhumanity to assume it. The only form of intuitionism that will bear a moment's examination is the general one, assuming an implicit knowledge of moral law,

while we must leave to experience the development of an explicit knowledge of it and its full extension. Only its *intension* can be given in original knowledge. Its *extension* represents just those influences which it is vain to deny in life, namely, education and discipline, which are the instruments of experience. The only object in defending any form of the doctrine at all is the necessity of supporting the very responsibility which the empiricist admits, and must admit, if he does not hold to the absolute relativity of all knowledge, which would mean that no two persons were sufficiently alike to justify the application of the same moral law to them. But this is too extravagant for any one to take seriously. Hence when empiricists admit the common consciousness which conditions a common experience and a common development, we may well concede that the variations which we observe in moral development are the product of experience; especially when it serves to explain and condition the humanity that is obligatory in a state of unequal responsibility. This will be seen in the sequel of the discussion of empiricism. In the meantime we can grant that particular intuitionism has no claims to stand upon, supporting, meanwhile, that form of it which does not oppose empiricism, while it serves as a basis for applying the same principles to all men in a social organism, though modified by the conditions that affect the *degrees* of responsibility, but not the existence of it. With this we may turn to the next class of theories.

IV. EXAMINATION OF EMPIRICAL THEORIES.—It will not be necessary here to follow out the analysis of theories farther than the two general forms, experientialism and evolutionism. Though we might discuss both *general* and *particular* experientialism with the same conception of the two terms as was applied to intuitionism, we should find that it would not serve any useful purpose. The nature of the arguments is such that the distinction does not require to be made, though it would result in denying the empirical character of the ultimate principles upon which morality rests and the affirmation that *particular* empiricism is true. This will be the conclusion that

we shall adopt, while the discussion of the question involves problems that are not peculiar to one of them alone, but to both alike. The first matter of importance will be to repeat a caution about the double meaning of the term "experience," and the effect of it upon the controversy. Only one of its significations opposes it to intuitionism, while the other is at least partly identical with it, so that we must not allow the formation of our opinions to create any illusions due to not observing the equivocation to which we have alluded.

**1st. Experientialism.**—The definition of this form of empiricism limits it to two conceptions—(a) the origin of moral *ideas*, not faculties; that is, conscience *phenomenally*, not transcendently, understood; and (b) the limitation of this origin to the experience of the *individual*, not the race. We shall discuss the theory by examining the arguments for it and then those against it.

**1. ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF EXPERIENTIALISM.**—The assumptions which are made in the argument are generally the same in both forms of the theory, though they are not always explicitly understood. The importance of a better understanding of them will appear in the sequel of our criticism. But in the meantime we can simply state and explain the cogency of the claims made in favor of the theory. The arguments upon which its advocates rely are as follows:

(a) *The Association of Conduct with Pleasure and Pain.*—This argument was proposed after Hartley's rediscovery of association as a fundamental law of mind. The utilitarians seized upon it to combat the doctrine which claimed, or seemed to claim, that the nature of moral rules about honesty, veracity, justice, theft, homicide, etc., were directly known without reference, near or remote, to pleasure and pain. Then again whatever the ultimate end of life, it was apparent that the particular virtues were but *means* to attain it, and the vices but means of losing it. Then the problem was to explain how we came to adopt such rules; how we came to connect them with the ultimate object of life. Inasmuch as the utilitarian maintained

that pleasure or happiness is the highest good and pain the only evil, his problem was to explain how we came to attach the predicate of morality to rules and actions which led to this result. His argument, therefore, was that whatever the source of our idea of the highest good, the rules for obtaining it came from the association of pleasure with the actions which led to it and of pain with those which led away from it. Thus if we came to set up honesty as a virtue it was because we found it uniformly associated with pleasure, and dishonesty with pain, just as we learned that putting our hands into the fire would cause pain. The desire to do anything immediately recalled previous experience with a similar act, and according as it had been accompanied by pleasure or pain there was inclination or restraint regarding it, and those actions were called good which conduced to pleasure and those were called bad which conduced to pain. At first the pleasures and pains, being concerned with the self-interested actions, would give rise to *egoistic* conduct which would not be strictly moral unless there was no conflict with the interests and rights of others. But the pleasures of sympathy and the pains of antipathy would give rise to conduct of a higher order, which we call *altruistic* and which is moral *par excellence*. Thus the whole range of morality is supposed to be covered by the influence of association.

(b) *The Influence of Authority*.—The association of conduct with pleasures and pains does not account for all the elements of morality or conscience. The sense of duty is a mental datum which the empiricist admits to be a form of constraint, that seems to oppose the pursuit of pleasure, and hence cannot be accounted for by association of pleasures and pains with the actions which it prompts, inasmuch as it often enjoins the sacrifice of a pleasure and the endurance of a pain. Hence in order to explain the origin of this feeling the empiricist appeals to the influence of authority which operates as some external force to limit the natural choice of the individual. It is a demand that the individual conform his conduct to the will of a superior power or an external order whether he desires to do so or not. The



application of such restraints as this authority implied was designed to obtain results which ought to come from sympathy, social instinct, and regard for higher powers. But since the individual is not always governed by these prompting agencies, the only resource was to apply the principle of rewards and penalties to enforce a course of action more in harmony with general interests than the egoistic instincts. This authority is of three kinds—*political, social, and religious*. They operate in the same way and to the same effect, but differ in their mode of application. Thus political authority and restraint prohibits certain actions like theft, murder, cheating, frauds, and injustice generally under appropriate penalties. Public opinion holds a man under condemnation who does not respect social welfare and ostracizes him socially for his disregard of others, so as to make it his interest to adjust his conduct to suit his social environment. Religious sanctions appeal to the pleasure and displeasure of a divine being with certain rewards and penalties here and hereafter to influence the individual's actions. All of these restraints operate to place a man in a struggle between his own natural desires and what is demanded by these external forces. From this conflict between what one *must* do and what he *would* do arises the sense of duty which is the constraint or necessity of obeying a law other than one's own desire or personal interest. In this way authority is supposed to produce the element of conscience, which is more than the mere pursuit of pleasure, and represents enforced adjustment to an order to which the individual would not spontaneously conform. The hope of reward and the fear of punishment are the motives to which authority appeals, so that duty is the unwilling pursuit of an object which it is dangerous to neglect and which the individual would like to disregard with impunity.

(c) *The Influence of Reason*.—If authority accounts for the feeling of constraint, it does not explain the voluntary obedience of the will out of respect for law after the restraints of power are removed. Thus parental authority may be necessary to obtain obedience and to form correct habits in the child, but there

comes a time when the momentum of habit continues after the force of authority has been removed. The same is true of political, social, and religious forces. A period arrives when they are no longer needed to induce right action and when the individual chooses it voluntarily and without compulsion. The individual has learned by this time to respect the object for which the various forms of external sanctions were applied. He has become reconciled to this purpose and given up the struggle against external forces to accept the right as the only rational thing to be desired. Disobedience is no longer a temptation to him. He has learned to love the right and to do it without constraint or resistance. Reason has taught him the right, and duty no longer means constraint or necessity, but reverence for its law, so that he now has a developed conscience and sense of morality with which he did not start in life. The highest motives now take the place of the conflict between duty and interest, and obedience to the former becomes an act of love and respect.

To illustrate this important development we may take a few examples. The child first obeys the parent because he fears his authority, and afterward when mature he sees for himself that the course enforced by authority is the right one and pursues it without resistance or the need of restraint. The citizen at first obeys the law under penalties and out of fear of them, but gradually learns that it is easier to obey willingly and to respect its commands than it is to be perpetually working under friction. At first the religious man follows the precepts of the divine ruler from motives of fear and afterward respects the law which at first constrained his obedience. Reason is the main factor here in providing enlightenment and in inducing the individual to pursue a course of voluntary righteousness. The influence of authority is lost and no longer necessary. The subject becomes independent of external restraint and dependent only upon conscience thus developed.

2. ARGUMENTS AGAINST EXPERIENTIALISM.—The criticism of empiricism will involve a very careful analysis of the various conceptions entering into the controversy, and which create

much confusion on both sides. It will also seem to offer a much larger number of objections than the three arguments in the defense of the theory. But this is only because there is much confusion as to its real meaning and in regard to the terms employed in discussing it. This fact will be brought out in its place. We must proceed with the criticism.

(a) *The Assumption of Association in any Case.*—The association of pleasures and pains with conduct must be assumed in any theory, and on this account cannot be made a special plea in favor of empiricism. No one has ever affirmed that pleasure is not the proper accompaniment and resultant of virtue and pain of vice. They may not be the immediate consequence, but they are sure to follow at some time and in some way, though we may not be able to establish the connection between a right act and some subsequent pleasure, or between a wrong act and some subsequent pain. Moreover, general intuitionism, which we have defended, depends as much as experientialism upon the association of pleasures and pains with conduct for the determination of the proper means to ends, so that association and experience do not determine the rightness of actions leading to an ideal end, but only their causal connection with it, a very necessary procedure under any theory.

(b) *The Non-moral Character of mere Authority.*—Authority can do nothing but appeal to the motive of *fear*, and this is not a moral feeling nor an element of conscience. Conduct from obedience to authority cannot have more than an *objectively* moral character. It does not reflect the slightest trace of subjective morality, and hence can effect absolutely nothing in producing the fundamental element of conscience, though it may develop the habit of deliberation. Conscience acts either from the constraint of duty or from the reverence of right, neither of which is found in the motive of fear, to which every form of authority appeals. Authority may have a place in the attainment of morality externally considered, but it is not the first nor the most important factor, if it effects anything at all in the moralization of man. It is this which must be realized in order

to produce conscience and its moral conceptions. Empiricism is under the delusion that authority is more than mere power. The term, in fact, is ambiguous. Now it denotes mere power which is able to enforce its will, and again it denotes legitimacy. If the empiricist uses it in the first sense, he fails to establish the genesis of conscience or moral ideas. If he uses it in the second sense he begs the question by reasoning in a circle. Legitimate authority contains the very morality which the empiricist is endeavoring to account for, while the theory requires that it shall not. On the other hand, if it be the sense of authority which external restraints create, the case is no better. For, if authority is taken as mere power, able to make itself effective, the sense of it is only the sense of power that the individual feels and he obeys out of fear. If it be the sense of legitimacy which the subject feels, then that quality either exists in the authority unaccounted for and prior to its effect on the individual, or it cannot be produced by merely enforced obedience, and simply reflects the prior and independent existence of that which authority is supposed to produce. At every turn, therefore, the argument from authority breaks down, no matter whether the authority be political, social, or religious, dynamic or legitimate.

(c) *The Irrelevance of Benevolent Instincts.*—Sympathy and benevolence may be good impulses, and it may be desirable to have them rather than the selfish. But as long as they are *mere* instincts they do not enter the field of conscious and rational morality, which is the phenomenon to be explained. In fact, if instincts of the benevolent kind were the whole of morality, there would be no need whatever of conscience. Moral and rational ideas must be superadded to them before they can be regarded as moral. If this is not true, they are moral and the phenomenon of morality is not accounted for by referring it to them. The theory requires that they shall not contain the elements of conscience in order that it may sustain the claim of its origin from their exercise, and we shall find that this assumption, too, is fatal to the doctrine. The problem is to know

whether *moral* impulses are modifications of *natural* impulses without the addition of a quality which the latter does not account for by derivation.

(d) *The Inconvertibility of Conscience with that from which Empiricism originates it.*—A theory of the genesis of conscience usually assumes that the source from which it is derived contains none of it. Indeed we can hardly be said to have explained its origin at all, unless we have named an antecedent which does not contain it. On the other hand, if it does contain it, we have either not found its origin or it is not what it is assumed to be. Now, empiricists have quite generally admitted that conscience or moral ideas contain elements which are not found in the sources to which they appeal for an explanation of it. If this assumption be true, there is reason to suppose that they can give it an origin later in the life of the individual than other and more primitive mental states. By supposition, if native, moral ideas must be as old, that is, coeval with consciousness, either implicitly or explicitly. But if they are not, their later appearance puts them on a level with the acquired ideas, and hence to show that morality is felt only long after experiences in pleasure and pain, and under the pressure of authority, is to show that it is subsequent to elements containing none of it, and its origin thus seems to rob it of its natural character. But the dilemma involved in this assumption is clear. On the one hand, if the elements from which morality is supposed to originate contain none of it, it is impossible to give it this derivation, and if they do contain it, either its origin has not been determined or its nature is the same as its source and is not what it is supposed to be, namely, different from its causes.

This criticism applies fully to the first two arguments advanced in favor of experientialism. In the first place, if association of pleasures and pains with particular acts originates the idea of right and wrong, then right and wrong can be nothing else than the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain, or it must be the reflex reaction of a moral faculty which represents more than this quality, and which has been set into action by

the influence of those experiences. But the latter supposition is nativism, and the former contradicts the admitted fact that conscience is more than the desire of pleasure. Moreover, if this association of pleasures and pains is sufficient to account for conscience, it is absurd to appeal to the influence of authority, which must either assume that other motives are necessary or wholly abandon its argument. In the second place, the same dilemma appears in the argument from authority. Power, such as authority is, either contains the morality which it originates or it does not. If it contains it, the origin of it is not determined; if it does not contain it, then morality cannot be derived from it, though elicited by it, and the mystery of its origin is as great as ever.

It should be again remarked that morality must lie at the basis of all authority or no other motive can be evoked by it than fear, inasmuch as it is, without this moral basis, nothing but the exercise of sheer power. In the former case its origin is not proved, and in the latter it does not exist. Conscience must exist behind authority or it cannot evoke moral obedience, and if it is not rendered legitimate by a moral purpose there can never arise the moral obligation to obey it. We might submit to it as to a superior power, but we should never feel that its commands deserved respect. The sense of duty arises only when we see that the authority is moral, and if it be moral that quality already exists before its exercise and before it is supposed to originate in the consciousness of those who obey it. In other words, moral consciousness has to exist before authority can originate it in any one else, and hence authority does not absolutely originate it. On the other hand, if it does not exist with the exercise of authority there can be no absolute duty to obey it. Prudence might dictate submission to its power, but conscience would never recognize its legitimacy and the sense of duty would have no reason for existence. The fact is that conscience is a precondition of knowing the legitimacy which reason comes to respect, and cannot be originated by that which is its object.

(e) *The Incompatibility of the Third with the First and Second Arguments.*—The introduction of reason to supply the sense of respect for law, which is a most important element of conscience, is an admission that neither the association of pleasures and pains nor the influence of authority can produce conscience. What the empiricist fails to see here is the distinction between subjective and objective morality, the latter of which may be attained *by any motive whatever*, and the former only by conscientiousness or good will, which involves the existence of conscience to begin with. The association of pleasures and pains with particular actions, and the exercise of authority which appeals to these very motives, may effect the realization of external morality, but they cannot produce internal morality, and it is an admission of the fact to resort to reason for the purpose of obtaining an element in conscience which they cannot supply. But this appeal to reason, as finally acquiescing in the regulations of political, social, and religious authority, is a *petitio principii* if it is meant to oppose intuitionism. For reason is precisely the source to which the nativist resorts, and as long as this is admitted to be a natural function of the subject we may say what we please about its relation to moral conceptions. They will be quite as native as the faculty whose function they are, and to use it as the final resort of empiricism is a subreption of the worst kind, involving the assumption of intuition without admitting it. Moreover, the reverence for moral law and authority, which is undoubtedly an element of conscience, but cannot be produced by any external influence, is more than the instinctive desire for pleasure and aversion to pain. For this reason it cannot be the expression of anything but natural powers of the individual, and as intuitionism does not depend for its truth upon the time when conscience manifests itself, or when the sense of duty becomes effective, it is clear that experience cannot originate it in any but the first sense of the term, not being able to produce any increment that is not found in the proper exercise of reason.

(f) *The Equivocal Import of the Term "Origin."*—The di-

lemma of empiricism, which has already been discussed, is created largely by the equivocation lurking in the term "origin," which has two distinct meanings. The first of these denotes a *beginning in time* and refers the event or phenomenon having an *initium* to a cause *containing none of it*. This is the efficient cause (*causa efficiens, ratio fiendi*) and is external to the event produced. An illustration of such a cause is sunshine causing the growth of vegetation, the stroke of a hammer causing an indenture in some substance, the death of an individual by a bullet, the destruction of an object by a cannon-ball or explosion, the effect of cold air upon the clouds to cause a rainfall, etc. The second meaning is that of *derivation or dependence of a fact upon something containing it*. This is logical participation or metaphysical origin, and the antecedent or condition of the thing whose nature and derivation is desired is called the *material cause* (*causa materialis, ratio essendi*). As illustrations we may instance the "origin" or derivation of benevolence from sympathy, of personal interest from the pursuit of pleasure, of murder from inhumanity, geometrical figures from space relations, particular from general truths, etc. Or, again, the morality of honesty, of earnestness, of truthfulness originates in the end which they subserve, and the policy of a government originates from the motives which it has in serving the people. All these and many other similar cases show how the characteristics of any particular fact are derived, or as we may say, have their "origin," from the general class of phenomena of which the particular act is a species or an illustration.

It is the difference between these two meanings which gives rise to much of the confusion of the problem and its discussion. In examining the origin of conscience we have two problems. The first is its *historical origin in time*, subsequent to events without which presumably it would not appear, and the second is the *derivation of its contents*, the general psychological phenomena which constitute it. In order to prove its claims empiricism must show that conscience is a new event in the course of development, that it has not been simultaneous with or ante-



cedent to certain other events presumably natural and yet not containing conscience. Now, it finds the association of pleasures and pains with conduct and the influence of authority prior to any voluntary recognition of moral law and intimately connected with the appearance of it, and hence it assigns conscience, phenomenally considered, of course, an "origin" in time later than the primary elements of consciousness. This is probably true. We can go farther and say that we think it is true. But it is no answer to the claim of the intuitionist whose position does not rest upon the *innateness* of conscience (transcendentally considered), though he is privileged to maintain this while also holding that the manifestation of it may be late in the history of consciousness, but it rests more especially upon the immediacy, the universality, and the necessity of its judgments *when it is manifested*. Experience, pleasure, and pain, and authority could not have a common effect were there not a common consciousness to appreciate them. It is apparent from this mode of argument that experientialism and intuitionism are not opposed to each other in this the first sense of the term origin. Experientialism simply refers to the *conditions* of the manifestation of conscience and intuitionism to the characteristics of it and the *mode* of its manifestation.

In regard to the second meaning of the term "origin," empiricism utterly fails to give the derivation of conscience, as its own argument practically confesses, unless it means to dissolve it into the pursuit of pleasure and the fear of authority. This would be an "origin" for it which could be disproved only by showing that as a matter of fact conscience contained other elements than the two mentioned. But empiricism helps at its own destruction by admitting that conscience contains elements which are not found in the phenomena from which it is presumably derived. Nothing is clearer than the general maxim that an object or thing cannot be evolved from that which contains none of it, unless we are going to admit the special creation theory, which the empiricist never does. Now, if conscience can be derived from elements not con-

taining it, there is no reason to limit them to pleasure and fear, and if it cannot be so derived, there is also no reason to resort to these elements, and we are left to certain mental functions to explain its "origin" or manifestation. The only remaining question is whether the faculty exhibiting moral phenomena is a natural one or not, or whether these phenomena are creations of empirical causes or not. No one is so hardy as to maintain this. The faculty exists and circumstances have only stimulated it into activity. The phenomena of conscience are thus natural with the characteristics claimed for them by the general intuitionist, though the empiricist be right in the claim that they do not appear until instigated by the causes to which he refers them. We find, then, by this analysis, that the two theories occupy two entirely distinct fields wholly unopposed to each other, and they only appear so when their advocates are under the illusion occasioned by the equivocation of the term "origin." Empiricism correctly surmises a set of influences which do not contain conscience or moral phenomena, but which act as instigating causes of their historical appearance, but decides nothing about their nativity, which is not dependent wholly upon an existence coeval with elementary consciousness. On the other hand, intuitionism demands an "origin" from elements containing what conscience represents, but is not concerned with its historical genesis, the two theories coming into conflict only when one assumes to perform the functions of the other. Besides this, empiricism, as already remarked, is wholly correct in its explanation of *particular* moral conceptions, the explicit knowledge of them and of general principles and of the extension of morality, while intuitionism must surrender this field. Beyond this, however, the intuitionist is as unquestionably correct in regard to the underived character of general moral principles and the impossibility of giving them an empirical "origin."

(g) *Confusion from the Conception of Experience.*—Many persons are the victims in this discussion of the etymological import of the term "*a priori*." Intuitive knowledge is often

called *a priori* because it can be determined from premises already known and without waiting until the facts take place in "experience." Thus I may infer *a priori* from the law of gravitation that a stone will fall to the ground, if unsupported, without waiting to see it fall. This is called *a priori* knowledge because it anticipates the perception (experience) of its actual occurrence, though it may not anticipate *all* "experience" whatsoever. But it is often defined as if it were prior to every form of experience, though it is prior to only one form of it. The two meanings to which we have already referred are primary perceptions or any realization in consciousness, and collective events with an increment at the end not found at the beginning. The former is a direct perception of a fact requiring but one trial to determine its truth, such as a burn, a sound, a sensation of color, occurrence of an accident, or the consciousness of any event whatever; the latter involves repetition under various conditions to verify a supposition made, or to establish the general character of a law or truth, as the merits of a democracy, the correct judgment of size and distance, the law of the tides, the uniformity of connection between any given act and a certain effect, the effect of wet weather upon the state of vegetation, etc. Now, it is evident that an *a priori* or intuitive truth cannot be perceived prior to "experience" in the first sense of that term, because they are identical in their meaning. Realization in consciousness and intuition are the same, and *a priori* denotes the same, with also at times, especially in the Kantian system, the added idea of subjective and necessary action of the mind. In this sense it expresses what is a law of thought, a condition of experience, and so prior to every form of it. But as applied to the act of mind perceiving a truth it is not prior to experience as an immediate perception. But as applied to the elementary mental perceptions it is and must be prior to "experience" in the second sense, which was the only meaning given the term by Aristotle and probably Greek thought generally, while the phrase "antecedent to experience," which has figured so generally as a definition of "*a priori*," has been

intended either for this meaning alone or for those conditions of experience which are merely the laws or capacities rather than the actions of consciousness. Hence it was only after the Aristotelian conception of experience had been changed, probably from the influence of Locke, to include immediate perception not requiring repetition or verification, that the notion of "antecedence to experience," as applied to a positive state of consciousness, came to seem absurd. But those cognitions which carry their own evidence with them when once perceived, such as every cause must have an effect, or *vice versa*, two and two make four, things equal to the same thing are equal to each other, etc., will always antecede the repeated or various "experiences" which may illustrate them, or such "experiences" as afford no positive conviction of any truth other than the facts of consciousness themselves. Now, moral convictions belong to this class of cognitions and perceptions; that is, the *subjective*, not the *objective*, elements of morality. They do not require repetition to verify them or to determine their value and imperativeness, while the objective do require it. Hence empiricism may explain the origin of our conception of the particulars of objective morality by showing the gradual growth of them in consciousness, but does not explain by the same process the appearance, tenacity, firmness, and universality of the subjective elements.

(h) *Contradiction of Its Anti-theological Argument.*—This objection is only *ad hominem* and applies only to the skeptical empiricist. Experientialists are usually skeptics in regard to the theory which refers the origin of morality to the will of God. In criticising this doctrine they emphasize the absurdity of having morality dependent upon mere will, or the fiat of arbitrary power, which is the same as authority. But then when proposing its derivation from experience the same persons appeal to authority, political and social, to account for it. This contradiction is very noticeable in the system of Mr. Spencer. He ridicules the doctrine of Jonathan Dymond, who thought that God could have reversed the character of virtue and vice

had He chosen to do so, and then proposes political, social, and religious restraints as determining influences in the production both of morality and moral consciousness. These restraints are nothing but the exercise of authority, which, as we have already shown, must be either nothing but the exercise of power—that is, superior strength—or legitimate power. The last of these, as we have seen, begs the question and the former contradicts the criticism of the theological doctrine. One or the other claim must be given up. We cannot reject the authority of God in one relation and set it up to do the same thing in another, and much less can we reject divine authority to substitute human authority for effecting what the will of God cannot do.

There may be empiricists, however, who do not deny the possibility of the theological theory, and against them this criticism will not apply. The previous argument is all that is relevant to their claims.

(i) *General Facts of Human Experience.*—All the objections to experientialism have been designed to apply only to the experience of the individual, though some of the arguments in favor of the theory are used in support of evolution. Whether relevant or not to evolution we do not care to say at present. We wish only to emphasize the fact that we are now only criticising the supposition that moral conceptions and conscience can be produced by the experience of the individual and do not require the experience of the race for the effect. This doctrine was the universal one among empiricists until evolution was advanced. It is sufficient to observe that it is now quite as universally abandoned for that of development, which admits the nativity of conscience and moral distinctions for the rationally developed man of to-day, but distributes the experience that produces them over the history of the race. This abandonment of it simply confirms the force of the objections above made to it, and the justification of that abandonment is found in the evidence of natural morality and of the existence of conscience among even the most degraded specimens of the human race. Conscience appears so quickly in many individuals, and so often

appears where there has been no experience worth mentioning, that it is easier to suppose it merely latent and inefficient than to invoke the precarious influence of association and the fear of authority to account for it. It is so universal in some measure of its exercise where experience is very slight, and so variously developed and ineffective where experience, association, and authority have been abundant, that it is easier to suppose it a native function, and that it is only the range of its application and efficiency which are influenced by experience.

**2d. Evolutionism.**—As we have already remarked, this theory endeavors to account for the faculty of conscience as well as its mode of action, inasmuch as it assumes that it is developed from an order of beings who were wholly without it. It is a deliberate attempt to bridge the chasm between man and the animals, morally as well as physically. It is thus much more radical in its empirical character than simple experientialism and has the advantage of appealing to periods of time which might account for much and whose influence an opponent is powerless to confute for the lack of data, and of the possibility of obtaining them, to make out a case. The arguments for it are the same as those for experientialism, though they receive appropriate and supplementary additions. For this reason it will not be necessary to cover the ground so exhaustively, but only to examine the additional facts upon which it depends, and in a general topic give our own conclusions regarding the doctrine. In the meantime an examination of Spencer and Darwin may serve for criticism. The following will be the arguments for evolution in addition to those for experientialism, which is confined to the life of the individual, and are here summarized without comment:

1. **FACTS IN SUPPORT OF EVOLUTION.**—These refer to influences which first affect the life and thought of the individual and are through him transmitted to the race and become permanent elements in the constitution of developed individuals in the later periods of history.

(a) *Adjustment to Environment.*—This is adaptation to all the

external influences which may impose any limitations upon the liberty and caprices of the individual, and comprises the effect of association of pleasures and pains, obedience to authority, political, social, and religious, and rational acquiescence in these limitations. Man finds himself in a universe where he must adjust himself to its conditions of climate, temperature, food, and his own physical wants. Then others demand equal rights with himself and political and social restraints are imposed in order to make each individual respect those rights. All these require very careful adjustment, physical, political, social, and moral, on the part of each individual. They impress a certain uniformity of conduct, such as environment may require for survival or for the attainment of welfare, and bring the individual will under law and order, subjecting it to other ends than its own caprices. *The effect is the attainment of objective morality.*

(b) *The Influence of Habit.*—This fact is the first that distinctively favors the doctrine of evolution. Habit is persistency in a certain course of conduct, and however it may be explained, it takes on a quasi-mechanical character. It always represents, after it is formed, the line of least resistance, and seems to effect a sort of organic or constitutional change in the nature of the subject, such as prompts him to act in that direction rather than in a new one. Thus the man who has been in the habit of regularly attending to his business becomes so fixed in his ways that he will continue to frequent his old places of activity long after he has retired from the life requiring it, and when there is no reason but habit to account for it. The habits of city life often render it very difficult, if not impossible, to draft off the inhabitants into a rural environment. Those thoroughly accustomed to the country feel out of place in the city. Habits of commercial business unfit a man, in some cases, for an intellectual life, and *vice versa*, and always make it more difficult. Intemperance becomes a fixed habit which scarcely any influence can overcome. Voluptuousness may so enslave an individual that he will commit suicide in a reverse of fortune rather than adjust himself to a new environment. These are all special and clear illus-

trations of the organic effects of habit. The effects are probably the same for every form of habit, good or bad, though they may not be so marked nor so fixed. They always render action along their line more easy and in that way create physical and mental tendencies in the individual that are very like a faculty and certainly strengthen and give supremacy over others to those which are specially active, while inactive impulses fall into disuse and decay. Moral habits in this way acquire efficiency to suppress the lower impulses and to keep them in subjection, while making it easier to adjust oneself to environment and strengthening their tendency to rule life and to become a permanent constitutional element of the subject.

(c) *The Influence of Heredity.*—Habit can do nothing but create a more or less permanent tendency to act along the line of least resistance and to give strength and supremacy to some particular impulse in the individual. But this capacity dies with the individual and is lost, unless there be some means of handing it on to the next generation. Well, heredity accomplishes this feat. The qualities of offspring are acquired from the parent. This is evident in the apparent permanency of the species. If any modifications take place they are very gradual, as evolutionists admit. But the passage from parent to offspring is so fixed that the same form, structure, capacities, wants, and actions are always expected and found from generation to generation, with only such changes as may be accounted for by adjustment, habit, and inherited increments. This is only the general fact, and it remains to ascertain whether the influence of habit on the individual can be inherited, whether the fixed way of acting, which Carlyle calls habit, in the ancestor, can become a predisposition or line of least resistance in posterity. The evolutionist holds that it can, and it does not matter here whether we hold with Weissmann that acquired characters are not inherited or whether we affirm that they are inherited. For we have only to suppose that the exercise of a function as shown in habit increases the power of the capacity connected with it, as an inherent quality of the individual, and reduces the action of



others in order to conform to Weissmann's demands. On the other hand, if habit as an acquired activity can appear in posterity as a predisposition in the same direction, the case is also made out. It is only a question whether habit expresses only an acquired character or both an inherent capacity rendered more efficient *and* an acquired character, and it does not require us to settle which it means. In either instance we can expect an increment from generation to generation which may result in wide divergencies after the lapse of long periods and variations of environment and experience. In this way habits of adjustment may become fixed tendencies in one generation and a predisposition of an organic character in the next, with a tendency to greater supremacy and the atrophy of competing impulses and functions. Moral qualities may gradually arise as they become useful and dominant in the consciousness of the subject, their tendency to development and permanence increasing with their exercise and their efficiency in supplanting non-moral instincts.

(d) *The Influence of Natural Selection.*—Natural selection expresses the tendency to survive of those individuals who best adjust themselves to environment, and who cultivate those qualities which are most useful in the struggle for existence. For instance, a due regard to the incidents of pleasure and pain will produce or favor the best physical conditions for competing with external forces. Obedience to authority will favor the individual who obeys, by giving him various advantages connected with improved living, and every habit which serves to perfect a man will tend to secure him survival against less favored competitors, just as the supremacy of one impulse secures its survival against others. Hence, the utility of moral conceptions would show itself in securing them supremacy and survival. The man who practices prudence would outbid the self-indulgent man and leave behind him more and better progeny for the next generation, with fewer handicapping tendencies. Then higher moral conceptions with the superior advantages conferred by them, with the attractions of character which they present to all

who admire them, and with everything to encourage the selection of the individuals possessing them for building up the social organism, would tend to propagate themselves more readily than those which are less adjusted to environment. Those possessing lower impulses would tend to disappear, and there would finally be left only those who showed the most prudence and the best conscience, indicating their adjustment to the conditions which will encourage nothing else. In this way that process of elimination of the bad and selection of the good goes on, which results in the universality of moral consciousness as it is observed to-day, except in those cases which are reversions to more primitive types. But natural selection tends to confer all the rewards of existence upon the best and strongest individuals, and to produce that uniformity of character which seems so much in favor of intuitionism. It adds to the influence of heredity a discriminating tendency in favor of the best, and against the worst, thus economizing and improving the resources of nature, and accomplishing the progress which evolution represents. Moral conceptions are only one of the many factors represented in this survival, but are the best and ripest fruit of that mysterious process which we are only beginning to fathom and in which, in his reverence for them, man has thought to find traces of the divine workmanship.

2. DARWIN'S VIEW OF CONSCIENCE AND ITS EVOLUTION.—Darwin's account of the origin of conscience is interesting as showing the weakness of the whole doctrine, as it is usually presented, though he deserves the credit of implying that it is a complex faculty or group of phenomena. But his analysis is very imperfect, and his explanation of its genesis exposes his doctrine to all the criticisms of which the opponent of evolution is so eager to avail himself. We shall state and examine his theory.

Darwin regards conscience as a modified social instinct. Duty and respect for law are but impulses directed by that instinct. It develops into the form known as conscience in the following manner: First there is the exercise of mutual sympathy among

animals, due to incipient, social instincts, as illustrated in gregariousness, tribal solidarity, and natural affections. The development of the mental faculties in the same connection would be accompanied by the memory of past actions, with the satisfaction that social impulses would yield, and the dissatisfaction yielded by the less social instincts. These would avail to encourage the social impulses and to give them the efficiency and supremacy which favor survival. Then when language was perfected public opinion could add its influence to social agencies of the natural kind. Sympathy and authority would supplement each other to overcome purely egoistic influences. Habit would strengthen sympathy and overcome the resistance implied in the fear of authority, and gradually give rise to respect for the end to which it was adjusted. By these processes the altruistic instincts would conquer the egoistic and become more permanent. The sense of duty arises in the struggle for supremacy between these two different impulses, though it is not found in the order of existence until we reach man.

This doctrine is very clearly stated by Darwin, along with confessions which very much mar its consistency. The criticism of it will bring out its defects and show more clearly what the real problem is, which will be found to differ very much from the conception of Mr. Darwin.

In the first place, conscience gets its name from the fact that it is more than a social instinct, more than both instinct and sociality, and it would not get the name were it not more than this. Hence its origin is not accounted for until this new element is derived. In order to derive it from elements found in the lower order of existence, Darwin should specify more than social instinct there, and that might be to merely abandon the question of origin. Social instincts, as instincts, may give rise to objective morality, but they can do nothing more. It is only when they are rationalized that they can be called moral, and they cannot be rationalized until reason is already in existence. But the fatal criticism to Darwin's theory is his admission that the essential element of a moral sense is the comparison of past and future

actions and motives, and that animals do not show any traces of, a disposition to make such a comparison. If conscience is developed from animal intelligence, we should find the elements of it there, and if animals do not show any traces of them, they either do not exist there or are a new character in man not referable to the process of evolution. The use made of language and public opinion is wholly irrelevant, as they can only render more efficient the functions already existing, but cannot originate them. Indeed the very reference to them as agents in the result proves his entire misunderstanding of the problem and his tendency to confuse "*origin*" with *evolution*. This is still more evident in the admission that the essential element of conscience is not found among animals, but is distinctly human, which only makes it a new factor, whose origin is either wholly unaccounted for or must be referred to the theory of special creation, which is the very doctrine Darwin would set aside.

In discussing Darwin's theory of the origin of moral sense and conscience, however, we must remember that it does not profess to be exhaustive, but is only a tentative effort to account for the very factor which opponents of the general doctrine maintained was sufficient to make an impassable chasm between man and brute. Had it not been that he tacitly conceded their main contention, the use of social instincts and the struggle between altruistic and egoistic impulses, with the consequent sense of duty incident to that conflict, would have rendered a very fair account of the matter by minimizing the distance between the two orders of existence, upon which the opponents of evolution relied in order to make out their case. But that concession was a fatal weakness, and the whole argument is an illustration of the need of more careful analysis of conscience, and of stating the various causes of it, so that their real influence could be understood. We shall turn next to the view of Mr. Spencer.

### 3. SPENCER'S THEORY OF THE EVOLUTION OF CONSCIENCE.

—Mr. Spencer has worked out his doctrine much more systematically. With him conscience and moral consciousness are the same, and sometimes he identifies moral consciousness with the

sense of obligation, though at others he seems to treat the latter as only one mode of the former. But he starts with the element that distinguishes moral consciousness and proceeds to explain its genesis. "The essential trait in moral consciousness," says he, "is the control of certain feelings by certain other feeling or feelings." In the first place, it is noticeable that this conception of it is wholly emotional. But such as it is, Mr. Spencer proceeds to show how this superior feeling obtained its power. This he says was due to the influence of religious, political, and social restraints, which effected a disposition to relinquish immediate good and to seek the more distant and general good. But while these restraints supplant *moral* control, according to Mr. Spencer, he is aware of the fact that they do not "constitute it, but are only preparatory to it." What the truly *moral* feeling is, Mr. Spencer regards as different from the mental state corresponding to these three forms of restraint and control. "The truly moral deterrent from murder," he says, "is not constituted by a representation of hanging as a consequence, or by a representation of tortures in hell as a consequence, or by a representation of the horror and hatred excited in fellow men; but by a representation of the necessary natural results—the infliction of death agony on the victim, the destruction of all his possibilities of happiness," which, Mr. Spencer might add, the man inherently feels is wrong. "One who is morally prompted to fight against a social evil," he continues, "has neither material benefit nor popular applause before his mind; but only the mischiefs he seeks to remove and the increased well-being which will follow their removal." Moral feeling is thus an estimate of the intrinsic worth or evil of certain things, and not mere constraint or coercion. This is unquestionably a correct analysis of the case, except that the intellectual element is here surreptitiously introduced into moral consciousness, but was excluded from it in the definition. But he is right in making moral feeling essentially different from that produced by the three forms of restraint, and yet after this admission one wonders how he expects to account for its genesis by reference to these restraints. In fact, as already observed, they

can produce nothing but *objective* morality, while leaving subjective morality wholly unexplained. When he comes to stating the genesis of the latter, it is apparent from his whole argument that he establishes nothing but its *efficiency*, not its *origin*. He assumes the capacity for estimating right and wrong, and possibly the actual consciousness of what right and wrong are, which is the phenomenon to be accounted for, while the argument only goes to show how the feeling of right and wrong conquers that which tempts the individual to disregard it. But conceding that this criticism is not accurate, which we have no space to examine in detail, the fatal incident in his theory is the flat statement that "the restraints properly distinguished as moral are unlike the restraints out of which they evolve." This is a very strange assertion after admitting that political, social, and religious restraints do not constitute moral feeling, *because it implies that something can be evolved out of that which contains none of it*. We have already indicated how necessary it is to the case of empiricism that this principle be assumed, and also how fatal it was to assume it. Mr. Spencer here states it in a very bold and offensive form, a form which practically admits the creation of new elements. After what has been said about the impossibility of deriving anything from that which contains none of it, without admitting the theory of special creation, which Mr. Spencer is opposing, it is not necessary to examine this statement more fully. It suffices to show the contradiction between the statement that political, social, and religious restraints do not originate restraints that are properly moral, but are only parallel and coincident with them, and the statement that moral restraints are unlike those from which they are evolved. This view reflects the same fatal conception of the problem that we found in Darwin's theory and in empiricism generally, due, of course, to the feeling that we must select a set of phenomena not containing conscience, in order to prove its comparatively later origin, and then assuming that it is derived from them. No doctrine of evolution can be sustained on such a postulate, except such as represents no opposition to the theory of special creation. This is

made sufficiently clear by the criticism of the same postulate in experientialism.

One interesting proof of the defect in Mr. Spencer's theory is a fact which represents considerable merit in it at the same time, but reflects the uselessness of supposing any material influence from the various restraints in the development of moral consciousness. This is his doctrine of the sense of obligation. Mr. Spencer considers this phenomenon as equivalent to moral consciousness or conscience, though he seems to intend that it shall be narrower and less complex. But he ascribes to it all the qualities that are in fact attributed to moral consciousness in general, namely, *authority* and *coerciveness*. He intends the latter attribute to be added to conscience as an accident of its nature. The sense of obligation, he claims, is developed from two influences. The first is the accumulated experiences which produce "the consciousness that guidance by feelings, which refer to remote and general results, is usually more conducive to welfare than guidance by feelings to be immediately gratified." These higher feelings have the characteristic of "authority," which with Mr. Spencer can mean nothing else than legitimacy, because the notion of power is introduced to describe the second element of obligation. "Authority," as legitimacy, can only mean respect for some end felt as a moral good, which we shall here call reverence to distinguish it from the associated notion of mere power which the term "authority" always suggests, and which the context of Mr. Spencer shows he does not mean. This is the element which he regards as the truly *moral* feeling, and which is not constituted by the three forms of external control. The second characteristic of obligation as defined by Mr. Spencer is *coerciveness*, or the feeling of constraint, the necessity of pursuing a course against one's natural inclinations. This, he maintains, is produced by the political, social, and religious restraints that bring the individual will under subjection. Now, as this feeling is not the true deterrent of wrong and prompter of the right, Mr. Spencer holds that it is the sign of a defective moral consciousness, and that it must "diminish as fast as morali-

zation increases." The sense of obligation, therefore, he holds is transitory, assuming that an ideal condition is possible or probable where coerciveness or the fear of "authority" (as power) is no longer needed. We shall not dwell upon the fact that his conclusion proves too much considered from the point of view of his own definition. If he had said that the feeling of coerciveness is transitory he would be both consistent and correct. But this is not the only element of obligation according to his own definition, which includes "authority," or reverence, as an essential characteristic. To make this transitory is to make moral consciousness transitory, and he does this by speaking of obligation rather than the feeling of coerciveness. He is perhaps true in this slip of the tongue to the common conception of it, but in that case he should have omitted the element of "authority" from it. But not to dwell upon this incident, the important fact to be noted is, that the elimination of coerciveness as a transitory element of moral consciousness goes to show that the several forms of restraint can be no factor in the production of moral consciousness, but only of a phenomenon which is not moral at all. Common sense even asserts that the fear of "authority" (as power, and in any other sense the "fear" can only be reverence) is not a moral incentive to action, and Mr. Spencer's elimination of it only coincides with that conviction. But it shows, first, that he had not realized that the only thing effected by these restraints was *objective* morality, and not moral consciousness properly defined, and second, that if the element of "authority" or reverence could exist independently of these restraints, they could not be the conditions of it in any sense that they were necessary to its character. That is to say, political, social, and religious restraints are designed only to produce coerciveness and are of no use when reverence or respect for the right exists independently of them, and as moral restraints cannot be evolved from the fear of power without disappearing with it, there is no reason to suppose that the restraint exercised by power ever had anything to do with the creation of this respect.



The criticism of Mr. Spencer sums itself up in the weakness of the position that morality can be evolved out of that which contains none of it. If he had maintained that the causes which invoke it or which act as efficient causes to produce its manifestation contain none of it, there would be less to say in the way of objection. But this would not be opposed to nativism, while the bald *creatio ex nihilo* doctrine involved in the evolution of a thing not containing it, though it favors empiricism, does so at the expense of the very principle for which evolution is supposed to stand. The question, then, remains whether we can sustain a doctrine of evolution at all, if the systems we have noticed are so vulnerable and defective.

V. CONCLUSIONS IN REGARD TO EVOLUTION.—Previous criticism would seem to imply that the doctrine of evolution would have to be rejected. But this conclusion would be a hasty one and must depend wholly upon the conception we take of the process. In fact, our entire criticism has been intended to bring out the need of more careful definition of the problem before taking one side or the other. The one great difficulty is that both opponents and advocates of the doctrine have not distinguished adequately between *creation* and *evolution*. Both have assumed that the doctrine of evolution is a theory of creation, a theory to account for the introduction of absolutely new qualities and functions without any appeal to extra-natural causes. On the one hand, the advocate of special creation had two facts to start from upon which he based the presumably impossible task of accounting for progress and different effects without the existence of supernatural causes. They are (a) the apparent fixity of species, and (b) the enormous chasm between different species which cannot be bridged by what we know of ordinary heredity. Inasmuch as it was admitted that all species had an origin, it was urged that the type was created supernaturally at the outset and left to continue its existence without any essential variation, while the differences between the various species were supposed to be so marked that the higher could not be evolved out of the lower, the differential characteristic or characteristics

being wholly new data, whose explanation was not referable to those of lower orders. The creationist's position, then, was, therefore, identified with the notion of miraculous, occasional, and supernatural interference with an order which could only explain invariability, inertia, or the absence of change. It accounted for the origin of life and for its modification in the same way, and even the origin of matter. But it has usually discussed the question as if it were only the origin of life and its modification that were concerned, and took the ground that the various increments and differences which we observe between the lower and higher orders of existence could not be explained by the supposition that the latter were evolved out of the former. On the other hand, the evolutionist denies the supernatural, denies the fixity of species, minimizes the differences between species, and attempts to account for the origin of everything by the sufficiency of natural causes. But his misfortune has been *that he has supported evolution upon creationist postulates*. First, he has admitted that there are new elements to be accounted for in the scale of existence which consistency required him to deny, and which the facts used in the argument required him to deny. Second, he assumed that natural causes could do what his own definition of them maintains that they cannot do, namely, the work of the supernatural. He assumed that something could be developed from that which contained none of it, while "natural" causes were supposed incapable of any such effect. If they were capable of producing this effect it would not be necessary to look for any law in the world at all, or for the limitation of any species to a like ancestry. Such a thing as sterility ought not to exist under any conception of the world which identifies evolution with the origin of things from that which contains none of them. It could only be an order in which things originated either spontaneously, that is, without a cause, or by supernatural agency. Hence the only resource for consistent evolution is to abandon the concession made to creationism and to analyze more carefully the phenomena which it tries to explain.

With this statement of the misunderstanding between the two

positions and of the weaknesses which have attended the usual defence of evolution we may proceed to show how the true conception of it applies to the problem of conscience. We have, then, first to consider the nature of the process.

**1st. The Nature of Evolution.**—The proper conception of evolution is that of *the expansion of capacities or the elicitation of latent powers into exercise and predominance over others*. In other words, it is *development*, not *creation*. Any other conception of it is sure to give trouble. Nor is it at all necessary to conceive it as opposed to creationist theories. It will confine itself to the task of showing how complex phenomena originate from the combination of elements whose "origin" does not concern it, and how certain phenomena become able to supplant the influence of others, but not how they originate from those containing none of them. It can leave the "origin" of elements and latent capacities to creationist doctrines. If there are any new elements introduced into the world order from time to time it can concede a place to creation; if not, it may go about the work of showing how the complex and progressive order of the world represents a modification of relations and combination among these elements; that is, *showing the derivation of complex phenomena without discussing the origin either of the elements or of the process*. The vulnerability of creationist theories lies in the facts that they have generally distinguished wrongly between natural and supernatural causes, ignored or denied the law of continuity, and assumed the simplicity and underivability of phenomena that were or are complex and derived from the union of simpler elements. Their strength lies in their ability to account for factors which the evolutionist conceded were not found in the antecedents of the phenomena to be explained, and had they, on the one hand, been more adept in proving the simplicity of the new factors under dispute they might have won their case, and had they, on the other, confined their argument to the fact that *all* phenomena must have some other causes than phenomena alone they would not have come into conflict with evolution. Had the evolutionists, on the

other hand, observed that they had endowed natural causes with creative powers, limited by the creationist to supernatural causes, as is indicated by their concession that natural causes could produce what was new and not contained in themselves, they would have abandoned an antagonism to theories which was based upon a false antithesis between natural and supernatural causes, and confined their task to showing how external influences elicit the exercise and development of latent capacities and functions, whether native or acquired. This would have left them free to discuss evolution without conditioning it upon the truth of metaphysical empiricism. It would have made the doctrine the complement of general nativism and the mere expression of orderly progress, which is more the result of combining existing forces and functions than it is the addition of new data to lower orders of nature. The total result may appear new, but its elements may not be new. This is only to say that evolution may give new *form* to its products, but not new *matter*. The importance of this conception will appear in the sequel.

Now, the comprehensive definition of conscience which we have adopted conduces to this view of the problem, because, instead of limiting it to a simple phenomenon like constraint or reverence, we make it the whole mind in relation to moral objects, comprising intellectual, emotional, and desiderative elements in a certain combination and application. Mr. Spencer has a clear conception of this in his general doctrine of evolution, and at the outset of his genesis of moral consciousness, but he spoils the whole effect of this by virtually conceding the unique and simple nature of the phenomenon, and by admitting the creationist postulate. But if we adhere closely to the true conception of evolution that it is merely the expansion of latent capacities, or the combination of them to produce an apparently new datum, we shall understand how conscience may, on the one hand, gain an efficiency which gives it supremacy among the impulses to action, and on the other, be on the whole a new capacity compared with lower orders where the combination of its elements does not exist. Keep-

ing this limitation of the problem in view, we may restate the process of evolution and show just what influence is exercised by the agencies invoked by the empiricists in general.

In the first place, association of pleasures and pains, and the imposition of various restraints on the individual, do tend to *develop*, but not to *create*, conscience, leaving for the present the question how the individual came to have it. But taking the individual early in his life, or early in the stage of civilization when there seems to be no conscience present, and certainly none that prevails in directing the will, these influences elicit mental states; they do not create them, but elicit them, as the expression of existing capacities, which states exercise an influence among the others. The memory of a past pain with a particular act avails to inhibit the repetition of the act, of a pleasure, to initiate its reoccurrence. Elementary restraint is involved in this, even when no arbitrary restrictions from other wills are supposed. It is the restraint or constraint of more long-sighted adjustment. This feeling would not occur but for the consciousness of two alternatives between which the choice must be made. The prevalence of the alternative involving the remoter good is so much in favor of its future prevalence until habit may overcome the feeling of constraint by removing the competition of the more proximate good. This constraint is more evident when political, social, and religious authority is used to limit liberty and restrain desire. They produce a conflict between alternatives that nature might not effect. It is quite as natural a phenomenon as any that may have been prior to it, but as long as no dangerous consequences, near or remote, are involved in the course of action first suggested, there is no need for the existence and influence of restraint, and it can be elicited only by the consciousness of conflict between two alternatives with the necessity of choosing for protection, or for realizing an ideal, that one which involves the least sacrifice. This constraint, which takes the name of obligation when there is any appreciation of the value and importance of its object, is quite as natural as any desire opposed to it. It is that function of consciousness which expresses the necessity of ad-

justment as against a free desire, and external influence only incites it to act; it does not create it, but only offers it an opportunity to become efficient. Habit, again, in adjustment to the altered environment sustains this efficiency until its momentum wholly suppresses the temptations of immediate good, and conscience thus becomes the expression of reason, the voluntary and willing service of duty.

This description of the growth of conscience seems only to be a repetition of the argument for experientialism, and so would seem merely to reinstate the very position we criticised. But in reply to this intended objection it is most important to remember that the difference between the two doctrines is very great. Experientialism is a theory of the "origin," genesis, the creation of conscience, as a new function of human consciousness, but what we are here defending is not its "origin," but *the occasion of its acquiring efficiency*, which is voluntary though the alternatives offering the occasion are externally produced. There is a vast difference between the "origin" or genesis of conscience, especially when that phrase will be taken to imply the "origin" of the faculty (transcendentally) rather than the "origin" of the specific consciousness of right and wrong (phenomenally), and the creation of an emergency where the efficiency of conscience is necessary for protection or self-realization. The latter position evades all the confusion, entanglements, and controversies of creationist metaphysics, while neither denying nor affirming its doctrine, and leaves external influences to the limited function of creating *conditions for the manifestation and increased efficiency of conscience*, and not for producing either its capacity or its phenomena. For where the capacity does not exist external restraints will act in vain, so far as the elicitation of conscience is concerned, and if this exists its phenomena are its own production though the occasion for them is or may be of foreign origin. They become more or less permanent through exercise, as habit establishes the line of least resistance until less moral impulses are atrophied and suppressed. The tendency thus becomes moral with its reflected elements of moral consciousness, though it is

only their efficiency and not their functional character which external agencies condition.

Now, the process of evolution, as applied to the race, simply takes whatever efficiency a function may have acquired through experience, and transmits it as a native propensity to the next generation, where it will require less influence from the outside to incite it to action. The process of strengthening it may thus be continued instead of beginning the work, as in the prior generation. The advantage from the process is that the whole of the work does not have to be done over again, and each successive generation begins where the last left off, until finally the order of supremacy among the impulses is reversed from the non-moral to the moral, the former being as inefficient as the latter were in the beginning. This is what is meant by the "origin" of conscience, the development of efficiency in mental states little disposed or qualified at the outset to compete vigorously with egoistic and non-moral feelings. It is the creation of a condition or emergency where the better functions of consciousness must exert themselves in behalf of the individual's protection and welfare, then the formation by habit of a permanent and fixed tendency, its transmission by heredity to the next generation, and the establishment of its universality by natural selection and the survival of the fittest. This assumes, however, that all the elements are given, and that evolution has only to give them efficiency and permanency.

We have distinguished between experientialism and evolutionism by saying that the former pretends only to explain the origin of the *phenomena*, the latter the *faculty* of conscience. This implies that the faculty is given in the individual, at least as he is known to-day. But evolution intends to account for what we now find in the individuals of the race, and the question is now raised whether new faculties can be originated by the influences mentioned any more than states of consciousness. The answer to this will depend upon the conception we take of conscience as a faculty. If it be a simple faculty limited, say, to the sense of duty, regret for error, or reverence for law, and

the capacity for feeling what either of these express, then we affirm that even evolution could not originate it, assuming that it was not given primordially, as a germ at least, in the fundamental data of consciousness. But if we conceive it as a *complex* faculty or set of co-operating functions its case may be very different. Take it as defined, namely, as the mind in its relation to moral phenomena, the mind conscious of and moved by moral objects, as intellect is a name for mind as conscious of phenomenal events, and we may well admit the possibility that there could be latent in this general consciousness a number of capacities which experience and heredity might, if given time, unite in efficiency and value so as to give an apparently new power. Suppose the cognitive, emotional, and desiderative elements to exist among lower orders of creation, but only in an isolated condition, each directed to an object of its own, and never combined upon an object known as moral, then conscience can be said not to exist though its components exist in solution. Thus, a being might cognize a series of acts which were cruel and yet not have those feelings which accompany or constitute a sense of cruelty; or a being might have a sense of cruelty from acts injurious to self and yet not realize associated feeling or connection with the same act upon others, or even cognize its similarity. Its sympathies or social instincts may not be called into co-operative action, and hence the complex idea of right and wrong, involving intellectual, emotional, and social elements of a high order, combined to produce a certain direction to consciousness, would not exist. If external influences ever produced a condition in which these proper elements entered into conjoint action and continued so, and reflection with association occupied itself with this condition, a nascent habit of action diverted in the direction of morality might very well originate, and once initiated the various interests, subjective and objective, might increase its momentum and efficiency until the cohesion of the several elements received that consistency which looks like a simple faculty, and which, from the prominence and value of one of its functions, like duty, might be confused with it. If we assume, therefore, that in man



this cohesion has reached the required fixity, as well as complexity, and that it is absent in the animals, we can well say that there is a difference in kind between them; that man has a conscience and the animals have not. The difference, however, is not in the elements, but in their mode of action. In man they are conjoined for a common object and are conscious of themselves. In animals they are either not co-operative at all, or if co-operative as instincts, they are not conscious or reflective. Hence conscience becomes a name for a group of co-operative functions which, so far from being evolved from that which contains none of it, is evolved from elements, each of which does not contain it as a whole, but which compose it. Evolution thus does not produce these elements, but it produces their complex and harmonious action. It produces the faculty as a complex whole as well as its efficiency, but without adding any new function to existence. Its influence is to consolidate existing functions, not to create them. But in consolidating them it produces a whole which is not found in lower orders, though we may find various imitations in the *partial* organization of it casually and perhaps temporarily. It is only in the consolidation of existing elements, however, that we can, on the one hand, maintain a true conception of evolution and, on the other, suppose that the resultant is in any way like a new quality. We may thus draw a qualitative distinction between different orders of existence which enables us to satisfy our feelings about the vast difference which morality establishes between man and animals; but as already remarked, it is a qualitative difference in the total, and not in the elements, and this is the only sense in which evolution can be said to originate conscience as a faculty.

**2d. The Importance of the Theory of Evolution.**—To many minds the doctrine of evolution has seemed to be destructive of ethics. This was no doubt due partly to the reaction against creationist theories with their theological associations, and partly to its affiliations with purely empirical principles and their latent nullification of responsibility. But this feeling after all has been a prejudice, which could not justify itself except by rejecting

the whole significance and value of education, which is a developing process upon the same scale as that we have described, and is everywhere lauded for that very consequence. Evolution is nothing but education, and education is nothing but evolution, while nativism is not opposed to either of them. All parties have appreciated the value of education and the theory of it, and should not take umbrage at evolution which only explains for the race what education does for the individual. But the proposition of it came when it gave a rude shock to certain prejudices and seemed to threaten the very foundations of morality. It is true that it does modify the theory of responsibility, as defended in the age of scholasticism. But this is precisely its merit. It does not wholly eliminate responsibility; it merely modifies the strictness and severity of its application to practical life, and this is a most important function in the development of human conduct. Let us examine how it does this.

We have seen two facts in regard to responsibility. First, the existence of it in any form whatever is conditioned upon the presence of the *faculty* of conscience at least, and the degree of it upon the extent of moral knowledge and feeling. Second, responsibility exists in different degrees with different men, according to the fact just mentioned. Now, in order to treat man as in any way morally responsible (not causally "responsible") we must assume that all individuals of the class have a capacity for moral distinctions and moral feelings. Moreover, we treat him as he *is*, not as he was in the earliest period when conscience did not exist as we know it. We may take him as evolutionists concede he is, whatever his origin or the origin of his conscience. This assumes that he now has moral faculty. Hence to that extent we consider all men responsible, limiting the quality, however, to the rational stage of his development. But we have already admitted that all men are not equally responsible. On this matter scholasticism was too severe and rigid. The doctrine of salvation and of eternal punishment were in its favor, and these influences were reinforced by the democratic spirit of Christianity, which made all men equal. It did not see that the only equality

that was defensible was the equality of his relation to *objective* morality, and not his equality in subjective capacities and merits. Hence, not distinguishing between these the doctrine of equal responsibility was everywhere the only view taken of man, with the exception of imbeciles and the insane. All men of any average sanity and rationality were adjudged as equally responsible, and it was supposed that any weakening of the doctrine meant the overthrow of all responsibility. But we have already shown that there are two stages of responsibility, one based upon the capacity for moral distinctions, and the other upon the degree of knowledge and moral sensibility, the last condition varying in all degrees. Now, evolution shows how these differences arise, and so explains why we should not treat all persons alike in the application of praise and blame. It is, of course, the fact of these differences rather than that of evolution which affects the degree of responsibility, but the theory of evolution shows how the facts come to be as they are, rather than determines their value and implication. With the vast differences of original endowment which might be expected in a world like the present, with the differences of experience, differences of heredity, of natural selection, of survival, and reversion to primitive types, and differences of condition and environment added to abnormal development—with all these sources of variation, we could only expect equal differences of responsibility, and it is the limitations upon this characteristic which evolution shows that give it its sole value to ethics. Wherever it is accepted with its implications there must be decidedly more humanity in our consideration and treatment of men, less adulation of them for their merits, and less reproach for their delinquencies. But it will not alter the corrective method of discipline, except in the matter of the length of time for applying it. Every consideration of evolution points to the importance of making the period of punishment indefinite and the time of conferring liberty upon the subject of it dependent upon his moral development under discipline. But it will neither tolerate the retributive methods of the past nor encourage the substitution of purely preventive measures, except in the worst

forms of criminal offence. In all cases, however, its voice is in favor of humanity, provided, of course, that we retain morality at all, and as the nature and validity of morality does not in the least depend upon the fact or truth of evolution, we may well suppose that the limitations of responsibility which it shows are its title to respect in our judgment of men, and this effect is its only value. It is a matter of considerable wonder that its advocates have not seen this feature of it, but have wholly passed it by and concentrated interest upon the doctrine, as if the validity of moral principles depended upon its issue. But the only pertinence which it possesses relates to responsibility, and even this is only indirect.

**3d. Relation of Evolutionism to Ethics.**—There is a widespread feeling that the doctrine of evolution is one of great importance to Ethics and that there is even an evolutionistic Ethics, or that the whole problem of morality is and must be transformed by the conception of development. This thesis we shall absolutely deny. At the same time it is not to be denied that the discussions and speculations of evolution have as a matter of fact very greatly influenced recent ethical controversies. In fact, the doctrine created so many apprehensions when it was first proposed that one of the first effects was to begin a thorough reconstruction of Ethics. The activity in this field has been very remarkable during the last two decades. More, perhaps, has been written upon the subject of Ethics than for two centuries previous. But the enthusiasm of the evolutionist and the belief that a new principle of Ethics was discovered were wholly misdirected. There is not a particle of reason to suppose that the real problem of Ethics has been in the least altered by evolution and evolutionistic theories. The causes for the actual influence exercised by it upon moral speculations were mainly outside the real problem of development. They were two: (a) the immense extension of the natural, and (b) the influence of the doctrine of the struggle for existence. The first of these influences has always been a matter of contention in the problem of Ethics and is not peculiar to the theory of evolution. The

question regarding how much place shall be given to natural conditions, mental or extra-mental, is merely the problem of how far we are to act independently of them and to keep them under due control, and is not *materially* affected by the discovery of the fact and of the mode of evolution. The theory of development has done no more than to emphasize and extend our conception of the conditions and limitations under which obligations exist. But it has added no new conditions or limitations except that of heredity, and this affects only the problem of responsibility and not the grounds of morality. The basis of morality remains the same whether evolution be true or not, so that the doctrine can only intensify the old controversy as to man's responsibility by its vast extension of the natural limitations under which he acts. But it is absolutely unrelated to the one fundamental question as to what is right and why it is right. The second cause is more interesting. This, as we saw, was the doctrine of the struggle for existence. Evolution referred the whole progress of the world to this one law with the survival of the fittest and the inheritance of their qualities, while moralists had been in the habit of referring it to growth in morality. The struggle for existence as everywhere exhibited was only a warfare between contending parties. It represents the ghastly spectacle of universal destruction, the triumph of mere force, and the embodiment of everything which is opposed to the ideal. Under it the universe seems one vast system of shambles for the destruction of the weak and the preservation of the strong. The only right respected in such a system is might or power. But it is apparent to every one at a glance that if any morality is to be maintained at all, it cannot come from an imitation or application of the struggle for existence and the indiscriminate warfare which it exhibits. Morality consists rather *in putting limits to the struggle for existence*, and hence cannot be derived from it. Mr. Huxley has finally admitted this in a lecture which has created a widespread interest for the very reason that it concedes all that moralists had ever charged against the capacity of evolution to furnish a foundation for Ethics in the only principle which the

doctrine needed for its special purpose, namely, the struggle for existence and the survival of the strong. If the idea represented by this fact, as we observe it in the various orders of existence, be the one from which duty and obligation are to be derived we should certainly find no reason for justice and benevolence. The struggle for existence is worse than a travesty of morality. It is the very antithesis of it. If we should change the conception of this struggle so that it did not represent a savage conflict between the weak and the strong, there would be less objection to it as a principle. But this would be to admit more in the lower stages of development than the doctrine had dared to suppose in its effort to show the evolution of the moral from the non-moral. It would assume that the process was more than a struggle between the strong and the weak and thus undermine the efficiency of the very principle upon which evolution was founded, except that we so changed the conception of it as to render perfectly absurd all the noise that has been made about the necessity of reconstructing Ethics. There can certainly be no objection to this result. But it justifies the critic of evolution and removes all right to place morality where it would be subject to the struggle for existence as that has hitherto been conceived and represented. Hence the evolutionist must either change his conception of the process of evolution to suit morality or he must admit that the notion of right and wrong cannot be deduced from the process. In either case he cannot suppose that morality depends for its basis upon evolution, which in reality has to do only with the *causes* of survival and growth, but not with the *contents* or nature of that whose survival and development it explains. If he changes the conception of the process to suit the nature of morality, he must admit that the problem of Ethics remains as it was before evolution was proposed. On the other hand, if the struggle for existence, conceived as a conflict between the weak and the strong, be the highest principle of evolution, then he must either deny that morality is anything more than this or admit that it has no foundation in the principle of evolution. The former alternative is so evidently ab-

surd and contrary to fact that not even the evolutionist ventures to maintain it and he is left to choose either the latter or the position that the struggle for existence contains more than has been represented of it. Either one of these is suicidal to the claim that Ethics is affected in the least by evolution, except in the application of the theory of responsibility.

The primary and fundamental problem of Ethics is *the nature, grounds, and validity* of morality, not its "origin" or genesis historically considered. The latter is a help, but not a condition of its analysis, and aside from this may be thrown aside in the solution of the one problem for which the science exists. Ethics asks and answers two questions: "*What* is right?" and "*Why* is it right?" Ultimately the answer to both questions must be the same, because whatever particular actions are decided to be right must have their character determined by the ground upon which they rest, the ultimate end which they serve. Hence the primary object of scientific Ethics is *the highest good, the ideal condition or end which it is a duty to realize*. After this it is interested in determining the particular course of conduct necessary for obtaining this end. It is perfectly clear that evolution has nothing to do with either of these problems. No matter how I may have been evolved, my duty remains the same, my nature being what it is, and also it remains what it is whether I have been evolved or not. Duties and the ideal are independent of that issue. It is no use to say that my duties would have been different had the course of evolution been different, for this might very well be admitted. *But if any duty whatever remains under any imaginable process of evolution, it not only proves that a given course of it has not originated the duty, but also that morality must be independent of the process*. Moreover, evolution cannot be conceived without reference to a goal or end. We cannot imagine it as creating the very end toward which it moves. Moral conduct derives its character from the end which it serves to attain, and this must exist as an object of consciousness before any process of conscious action can aim at it. Now, evolution must be either a conscious or an unconscious process.

If it be unconscious it can have no end in view, but only a consequence can occur as the sequel of it, and no morality whatever is possible in the case. On the other hand, if it be conscious the ideal end in view is not a creation of the process, and the determination of it must be independent of evolutionistic methods, except that we take evolution to mean what its most strenuous advocates seem to imply that it is not. We may talk about the evolution of the ideal, if we mean by it the development of its efficiency and the domination of it in consciousness. But **this is** not the creation or origination of it. The ideal only begins *with* the conception of morality in its *quality or intension*, and leaves to evolution the process of developing its *quantity or extension*, increasing its efficiency and enlarging the conscious range of its application. But the whole question as to what constitutes morality, its grounds, and validity remains absolutely untouched by the method of development. We have already found that morality must be given in some degree as a datum before evolution can do anything for it or with it. We have to determine the ideal end of conduct in order even to know whether evolution involves progress or not. The process evolves both good and evil alike, and if we were to condition morality upon the principles of such a process we should have to abandon it for the lack of a criterion to distinguish between right and wrong. Hence the value of the ideal, which is the ground for justifying special actions, must be determined by some other means than the fact and the method of evolution.

Mr. Sidgwick aptly distinguishes between three different problems, only one of which the method of evolution represents. They are: (a) the *existence* of moral judgments, which is a psychological question of fact and must be determined by direct introspection supplemented by observation of similar phenomena in others as language and signs may indicate them; (b) the *origin* of moral judgments, which he calls a "psychogonical" question, involving the application of purely historical methods; and (c) the *validity* of moral judgments, which is the ethical question and which must be determined in the same way that the validity of



any truth is determined. "Indeed, it seems clear," says Mr. Sidgwick, "that the question as to existence ought to be settled before raising the question of origin, since it is premature to inquire into the origin of anything before we have ascertained that it actually exists." Then it is just as true that validity is independent of "origin," because if it were not, we should have to say that the theory of gravitation, of Copernican astronomy, of the tides, and of any other set of phenomena could not be true until we knew how it originated. The matter of origin is interesting as establishing the time when responsibility can be applied, but it does not condition the truth or the value of that which is originated. Hence the doctrine of evolution has but a very subordinate value in important questions of Ethics, and all the noise made about its revolutionizing the subject is simply sound and fury, signifying nothing, and conceals a most astonishing ignorance behind the mask of knowledge, while the only service of the doctrine, its relation to the application of responsibility, goes absolutely unnoticed.

*References.*—Muirhead: *Elements of Ethics*, pp. 125-150; Murray: *Introduction to Ethics*, pp. 43-58; Bowne: *Principles of Ethics*, pp. 124-163; Darwin: *Descent of Man*, Chapters IV. and V.; Spencer: *Principles of Ethics*, Vol. I., pp. 64-150; Calderwood: *Handbook of Moral Philosophy*, pp. 95-130 (Fourteenth Edition); Alexander: *Moral Order and Progress*, pp. 297-316, 353-368; Martineau: *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II., pp. 360-424; Leslie Stephen: *Science of Ethics*, Chapter III., pp. 93-130; Fiske: *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy*, Vol. II., Part II., Chapter XXII., pp. 324-366; Wundt: *Ethik*, pp. 88-231, 369-372; Schurman: *The Ethical Import of Darwinism*; *Andover Review*, November, 1886, pp. 449-466; April, 1888, pp. 348-366; *New Englander and Yale Review*, April, 1888, pp. 260-280; September, 1890, pp. 260-275; *Christian Thought*, August, 1891, pp. 14-38; *Mind*, Vol. I., pp. 334-345.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE THEORIES AND NATURE OF MORALITY.

*I. INTRODUCTORY.*—The definition of terms has thrown much light upon what the human mind means by morality, but it has not determined anything in regard to the nature of the highest good or ideal end of conduct. It was merely assumed that there was such an ideal. We have now, however, to enter more carefully into the analysis of morality in reference to its grounds, or the reasons for its being what it is and for our obligations to respect it. In determining its nature, we have said that two questions have to be answered, and a third question in regard to our knowledge of it. They are: (a) *What* is right? (b) *Why* is it right? and (c) How do we *know* it is right? The answer to the first question gives the particular actions which are right, or are considered as right, such as respect for life, honesty, purity, benevolence, courage, etc. The answer to the second question gives the reason in some proximate or ultimate principle or end for their morality, the ground upon which they rest, and of course ultimately the one principle to which they are reducible. The answer to the third question gives the process of experience or knowledge by which I am made aware of this morality. It is only the latter two questions that give rise to any theories about morality. The answer to the first is merely a statement of matters of fact or matters of belief. But the structure of the human mind has never been satisfied with a mere assertion of what is regarded as right. Interests, both scientific and social, demanded that we know why such conceptions were accepted and how we came to have them. On the one hand, the scientific impulse asks to have a reason for all the various duties

imposed by men on each other, if for no other purpose than to satisfy curiosity about their reduction to unity. On the other hand, social interests demand that no obligation be imposed arbitrarily and without any recognized principle in the nature, rights, and knowledge of the person upon whom it is placed. Hence arises some theoretical explanation of what morality is and how we come to know it. But there has not been any unanimity of opinion on the matter. The attempt to explain why the various duties of common life are binding, or why the practice of them is a virtue, has resulted in a great variety of theories, each competing for acceptance and supremacy, and very much unsettling the problem of the nature of morality. In order, therefore, to understand the complexities of the question and the relation of these various theories to each other, before undertaking any direct solution of the problem itself, we must classify the theories that have attempted to assign the ultimate principle of morality.

**II. CLASSIFICATION OF THEORIES.**—We shall undertake in this section nothing but a classification of the various ways in which the question, why certain actions are right, or why they should be done, has been answered, and leave the discussion of them until afterward. We shall be obliged to state the method or principle upon which each theory rests, which will be in a measure a definition of it. But it will not be necessary in the classification to go farther.

The most comprehensive division of theories which can be recognized, is that which we shall call the *Subjective* and the *Objective* theories. This division coincides with Mr. Martineau's division into psychological and unpsychological theories.

**1st. Objective Theories.**—Objective theories of right are those which seek the ground of morality outside of the person upon whom it is binding. They represent some form of external nature or authority and place the reason for right outside of all control, acceptance, or consent of those who must obey. But they take two forms, the *Ontological* and the *Nomological*.

**1. ONTOLOGICAL THEORIES.**—These theories represent the foundation of morality as found in the nature of being, the con-

stitution of ultimate reality, and again appear in two forms, according as they are *theistic* or *naturalistic*. We shall call them the *Theological* and the *Cosmological* theories.

(a) *The Theological Theory*.—This theory places the foundation of right in *the nature of God*. Its chief object by those who have supported it has been to give it a firmer and more lasting character and greater authority than if it were founded in human nature, which seems to be constituted by so many conflicting impulses as to make it of doubtful value as a judge or basis of right. Hence, assuming that God represents the Absolute, it was designed in that way to give absoluteness and eternity to moral law, while also indicating the *personality* of its authority. The theory is metaphysical in its character and is apt to conceive morality as a thing apart from the intelligence which is to accept and obey it. Instances of it are Hodge and many scholastics.

(b) *The Cosmological Theory*.—This doctrine places the foundation of right in *the nature of things*. This view is contrasted with the theological theory in the attempt to give moral law an *impersonal* source and authority. It arose in opposition to sophistic doctrine, and endeavors to hold that moral distinctions are eternal and binding even upon God. It avoids the phraseology of the theological theory in order to avoid any implications that might connect moral law with arbitrary power. It is not essentially opposed to that theory, but hopes to give a more impersonal expression to the basis of morality. The best illustrations of the theory are Plato, Cudworth, and some minor writers, probably including Price and Clarke.

2. *NOMOLOGICAL THEORIES*.—Nomological theories of morality found it in some way upon *the fiat of power*, the arbitrary creation of will. They refer morality directly to mere authority, while the theory referring it to the nature of God only invokes authority indirectly. In the nomological theories moral distinctions are supposed to have a beginning in time and that the nature of the world might have been without any relations or phenomena that we call moral. Hence they subject morality

to the fiat of arbitrary power, and are divided into two classes, according as this power is *divine* or *human*. We shall call them *Theo-volitional* and *Political* or *Conventional* theories.

(a) *The Theo-volitional Theory*.—This theory refers the ground and authority of morality to *the will of God*, as distinguished from His nature and in its pure form admits or rather affirms that this will has supreme power to create and uncreate moral distinctions. It opposes the power of man to do the same on the ground that it is finite and that whatever he is able to do must be traced to the creative will of the Deity. The doctrine arose in pre-sophistic times, when there was the habit of tracing everything to the gods and has been continued by men who hoped thereby to exalt the divine by refusing to admit any limitations to divine power. The exponents of it are Jonathan Dymond, some scholastics, and pre-sophistic writers.

(b) *The Political Theory*.—This theory founds moral distinctions upon *the will of man*; not upon the will of every man, but upon that of the ruling power, with or without the consent of the subject. It was a doctrine designed originally to explain the origin and authority of *positive* laws and institutions, and not to assign the abstract foundation of right and wrong. But the irresponsibility of the monarch or ruler made it practically an account of the ultimate source and authority of morality, this being interpreted as not having any obligations beyond the power of the executive to enforce it. It was maintained by the Sophists, Machiavelli, and Hobbes.

**2d. Subjective Theories.**—This class of theories traces the foundation of moral distinctions to *the nature of the reason in the person upon whom morality is binding*. They are, therefore, contrasted with the objective point of view in this important particular, that the *subject's* own nature is the first thing to be taken into account in order to establish any responsibility whatever, or the liability to praise and blame. They wholly eliminate the idea of *authority* as external power, or if they retain it at all do so under the idea of legitimacy. They are also opposed to the objective theories as psychological are opposed to

metaphysical doctrines, and are divided into two subordinate classes according as right is determined by the *end* which it attains or by the way it is *known*. They are the *Teleological* and the *Gnosiological* theories.

1. TELEOLOGICAL THEORIES—Teleological theories measure right and wrong by the *ends* sought. Reference to an end is the meaning of the word teleological, and hence we intend by it to describe all those views which estimate conduct with reference, not to external powers or authorities, nor to the nature of external existence, but to the ends and consequences of it. They do not look at conduct merely as action in the abstract and as something having intrinsic moral qualities apart from its relation as a means to something else, but only as an intermediate agency for attaining or preventing the attainment of the good. If the end be good, the act is right; if the end be bad, the act is wrong. But teleological theories divide upon the question as to what the good is. Some make it pleasure or happiness (excellence of *feeling*), others virtue or perfection (excellence of *being*). Hence there are two classes of teleological theories, *Hedonism* and what I shall venture to call *Moralism*.

(a) *Hedonism*.—Hedonism (Greek *ἡδονή*—pleasure) denotes the theory which makes pleasure the ultimate end of conduct. Sometimes the term is used to denote only that view which makes the end *sensuous* pleasure, and hence contrasts with *Eudæmonism*, which is sometimes used to denote the theory based upon *intellectual* pleasures. But this distinction serves no other purpose than a historical one. It merely describes the controversy that turned partly upon what was presumed to be the original meaning of the Greek term for pleasure (*ἡδονή*), which many of the philosophers of the early period, not having carried analysis very far, limited to the pleasure of sense, and partly upon the distinction between Aristotle's doctrine and the Ethics of the Sophists. But Aristotle meant *welfare* by *εὐδαιμονία* and not pleasure or happiness as feeling, and we should not confuse his distinction between moral and intellectual pleasures, with the ultimate conception of his system, though it includes

both elements. Moreover, even in Greek usage, pleasure (*ἡδονή*) had a general meaning, very noticeable in Plato, broader than mere sensuous feeling, and might denote any mental elation or emotion of that type, though probably the most frequent use of the term was the sensuous. And again, modern usage, both in regard to the generic meaning of the term pleasure and that of "hedonic" and "hedonism," justifies the application which we intend to make of the term to denote every form of theory which applies to pleasure as the criterion and end of morality. Hence we shall mean by Hedonism the whole class of theories which appeal to pleasure, whatever its kind or degree, and in this way contrast it with the class of theories which deny the morality of pursuing mere pleasure.

But the pleasure sought may refer either to that of the *subject* or to that of the *object*, to the individual himself, or to others comprising the family, tribe, or society at large. On this basis Hedonism takes two forms according as the pleasure is individualistic or universalistic, egoistic or altruistic. Hence there are two subdivisions of the theory, which we may call *Egoism* and *Altruism*, or *Individualism* (ethical) and *Socialism*. Utilitarianism may be added as combining both of them. Egoism or Individualism asserts that all conduct must be judged as good or bad according to the consequences to the individual subject. Altruism or *Socialism*, on the other hand, includes the pleasure or happiness of others and may require the sacrifice of some happiness on the part of individuals, perhaps the minority, to that of others, the majority. The question of kinds of pleasure here does not enter into the definition or division of the theory.

(b) *Moralism*.—Moralism is the type of theories which deny that pleasure is the highest good, and substitute some other form of excellence which is often expressed by the term *virtue* as contrasted with pleasure. This virtue or excellence may take two forms, *excellence of being* and *excellence of will*. Accordingly we find two forms of Moralism, which we shall call *Perfectionism* and *Formalism*. Perfectionism is the theory which makes per-

fection the highest good and foundation of all virtue instead of pleasure. Formalism is the theory which makes *good-will* the highest good instead of pleasure. It demands nothing but obedience to the sense of duty or categorical imperative and the keeping of consequences out of view. The theory was held in its purest form by Kant.

2. GNOSIOLOGICAL THEORIES.—The term gnosiological is derived from two words (*γινώσκω*, to know, and *λόγος*, discourse), and is here used to denote that class of theories which are concerned, not with the *nature*, but with the *knowledge*, of morality, namely, with the origin of our ideas of it. These theories divide upon the question whether our conception of morality is native or acquired, *a priori* or *a posteriori*, intuitive or empirical. Hence there are two forms of gnosiological theories, which we shall call *Intuitionism* and *Empiricism*. They are in effect the same as those which were discussed under the problems of Conscience. Intuitionism holds that moral ideas are native and immediate objects of perception to all rational minds. Empiricism holds that they are derived by experience.

The following is a tabular review of this classification :

Theories of Ethics	Objective	Ontological	{ Theological = The Nature of God. Cosmological = The Nature of Things.
		Nomological	{ Theo-volitional = The Will of God. Political = The Will of Man. Convention.
		Teleological	{ Hedonism { Egoism or Individualism. { Altruism or Socialism. { Utilitarianism.
	Subjective	Moralism	{ Perfectionism. { Formalism.
		Intuitionism	{ General. { Particular.
		Empiricism	{ General. { Particular.

It will be observed in this classification that we have made no place for evolution. After what has been said about the relation of that doctrine to Ethics it should be apparent why we have not given it a distinct place in the scheme. In the first place, however, as usually maintained, the theory is a complex



one involving several of the points of view in this classification. It is partly cosmological in its conception of the problem; partly teleological, being usually utilitarian, but sometimes perfectionistic, and sometimes both, and partly gnosiological in that it is always empirical. In the second place, after defining it as properly occupied with the *origin* of morality and of moral conceptions, we must shut it out of a place in all but the last class of theories which recognize only the origin of the *conceptions* of morality, not its nature. Hence, evolution as a general theory cannot stand in this scheme, but it is partly represented by empiricism.

We have also to remark the place given to utilitarianism, which may have its individualistic or egoistic and its socialistic or altruistic side. We have here made it co-ordinate with the other two. This is not because it necessarily excludes both, but because its historical character has been altruistic, while admitting that utility, the great principle of this theory, may apply to the individual as well as to society. But the fact that utilitarianism has always stood opposed to the selfish view of life, which is the only conception that can oppose egoism to altruism, justifies our setting aside what may be called individualistic utilitarianism and using the terms "utility" and "utilitarian" as referring to the good of the whole, *including* the individual, and not to the good of the individual *alone*, nor to the good of the *majority* alone. We shall see farther reasons again for this procedure.

As the classification stands, however, it is intended to comprehend all the existing points of view in regard to morality. We have not divided them in any way to make them mutually exclusive, but only as historical development has defined them, and may discover something about their various relations as the discussion continues. We shall give but a brief examination to the first two great classes of theories and reserve the most of the discussion for *Hedonism* and *Moralism*, while referring students and readers to the chapter on the origin of conscience for the treatment of gnosiological theories.

**III. EXAMINATION OF GENERAL THEORIES.**—In this discussion we shall take up only the Ontological and the Nomological theories, and dispose of them as briefly as possible. We must find what place they occupy in the discussion of Ethics and determine their merits and demerits.

**1st. The Ontological Theories.**—As already explained, the theories bearing this characteristic are concerned with the ultimate foundation of morality in the very nature of the Absolute, whether it be regarded as personal or impersonal. They oppose all suppositions that moral distinctions are merely accidents in the course of the world and capable of being asserted and nullified at pleasure. In that sense both the theological and the cosmological points of view may be true at the same time. Ultimately all things that are a constitutional part of the world and ineradicable in it, are and must be referred in some way to the Absolute; and it makes very little difference whether we regard it as personal or impersonal, so far as the mere reference of morality is concerned. This is only to say that both of these theories must be true in some sense in all cases, no matter what is said about other theories. The criticism to be made against both, however, is that neither of them solves the problem of scientific Ethics, which is rather to provide the *end* of conduct which will subordinate all other things to its attainment than to settle the metaphysical ground of morality, which at all hazards must be found in the Absolute. This is apparent in the fact that skepticism of the divine existence simply shatters all power in the theological theory, while it leaves untouched the natural desire to determine the highest good. Ethics has to do with the *summum bonum*, and not with the moral nature, of the Absolute, and hence though it is true that its metaphysical affiliations, as those of all the sciences, connect it with the Absolute and with the metaphysics of the Absolute, the question of the highest good does not. Moreover, to insist on adopting the theological theory prior to the formulation of any practical rules for life, is to shift the whole controversy over into theology, requiring the settlement of both God's nature and existence before we could talk

about the possibility of inducing skeptical men to be righteous. There is a ground upon which moral theory can stand without contradicting the theistic view and yet without conditioning morality upon the acceptance of it. This is the only rational course to be taken where the main object of Ethics is, first, to settle the highest good, and second, to furnish a practical, rather than a metaphysical, basis for morality. Precisely the same remarks can be made in reference to the cosmological theory. It has the same merits and defects as the theological view, and must be treated in the same way. It evades equally with the theological position the real issue of the question, though it is also true, and hence it may be dismissed without controverting it.

**2d. The Nomological Theories.**—As already defined, these theories base morality upon the arbitrary agency of creative power, namely, upon will of some kind. The one objection to such theories is that morality cannot be a creation of will without involving a denial of the moral character of the will or agent who thus creates it. The universal conception of will is that it is subject to moral law, and what is not so subject to it is not will or personal at all. To make God independent of moral law, and able to make anything, even wrong, moral, is not only monstrous, but is a distinct abandonment and contradiction of theism. Nor is it any help to such a theory to make God's will perfect or an expression of his nature. For this may be true; but it abandons the nomological for the ontological doctrine, which it is the purpose of the nomological to set aside. Moreover, to make his will perfect is to admit that this moral quality is not a creation of the will; for it cannot create itself. Hence it is essentially absurd to suppose that will, whether finite or infinite, can serve as the basis of morality. In addition to fatal criticisms of this kind, nomological theories are encumbered with the objectionable implications of arbitrary authority exerted to coerce obedience against the dictates of reason and conscience. They were put forward in times of political or ecclesiastical tyranny in order to frighten men into subjection

to bad government, and nothing remains to support them but a desire to do God a false honor, on the one hand, and justify despotic government, on the other.

But while the theories are not an adequate explanation of the moral law and of its origin, they may have an important thought concealed in them and not even detected by their advocates. Taking up the theo-volitional doctrine first we can say, that while the will of God is not the *ground* of morality, it may be a *good reason for obeying it*. Assuming that God exists and that, according to the moral law which He recognizes, He commands respect for it, then that command is a reason for obeying, but not a ground for the nature of the law. If this is what the theory wishes to express there can be no objection to it. But unfortunately this has not been its language or its intention. It has sought to exalt the power of God upon the assumption of a false notion of infinite power, and can deceive none but small thinkers. Then taking up the political or conventional theory the argument against the capacity of the human will to create or serve as the basis of morality is an *a fortiori* one. No one but the advocate of the most absolute despotism, whether monarchical or democratic, could seriously make such a claim. Indeed, we may safely leave to the overwhelming revolt of mankind against arbitrary power the refutation of such a theory, and not give it any serious attention. But while convention cannot originate morality or moral distinctions, *it can do much to make them effective*. Convention always appeals to reason, rightly or wrongly, to justify the application of power to enforce a certain course of conduct, and thus acknowledges a prior *moral* law to its own *positive* enactments and determining their character. But it does not create that law. Will may *enforce* the moral law, but it cannot *create* it. It may render it *efficient*, but it cannot be the *basis* of it. This determines the limitations of all nomological theories.

IV. CRITICISM OF HEDONISM.—As already defined hedonism is the theory which bases morality upon pleasure. It takes its various forms according to the object which gives the pleasure,

and hence this may be high or low in character. But since the only form of hedonism which has received any special development is utilitarianism we may give the most attention to that conception of it. A few observations, however, preliminary to that view are necessary in order to clear the ground. We shall, therefore, notice briefly the theory of egoism.

**1st. Egoistic Hedonism.**—It will not be the hedonistic aspect of this theory, but the egoistic, that will receive present attention. There is a striking ambiguity about the term "egoism" which must be cleared up before contrasting the theory by that name too distinctly with utilitarian hedonism. The term may denote (*a*) *exclusive* reference to self in conduct, or (*b*) reference to self while not conflicting with the happiness of others. The former conception if legitimated would lead to the sacrifice of society or others to the individual, and means that selfishness is the criterion of morality. This is so palpably absurd that the theory can have no footing whatever in that sense and is universally condemned because what is moral involves the conservation of social order and a sacrifice on the part of the individual of all that does not admit equal liberty and rights on the part of others. On the other hand, it is quite as absurd to insist that a man should have no reference to himself whatever in the attempt to attain the ideal, and hence moralists admit that a man should have reference to himself in his conduct, but assert that he should not have reference to himself alone; and if egoism meant merely "reference to self" without implying anything about sacrifice, either of others or of self, it would not conflict with utilitarianism. But it is only in the selfish sense that the term describes a theory opposed to all conceptions of morality whatever, and as this point of view is universally condemned there is no use in giving it any serious attention. The only form of hedonism about which any controversy centers is that of utilitarian hedonism, which intends to avoid the distinction between egoism and altruism altogether as opposing conceptions and to comprehend the proper aspects of both.

**2d. Altruistic Hedonism.**—This conception also has an equivocal import. It may denote action (*a*) *exclusively* in reference to others and with the sacrifice of self, or (*b*) in reference to others without any sacrifice of self. The absurdity of the former demand, namely, that the individual must sacrifice always and everything in order to be moral, is so apparent that the only form of altruism which can be recognized as rational is the second, which insists that a man should include a reference to others in his conduct. But this will not shut out a direct or indirect reference to himself, and hence the egoistic and altruistic position can be united by shutting out selfishness, on the one hand, which involves an unfair sacrifice of others, and unfair sacrifice of self, on the other. We might even say that the only difficulty with the two theories is found in taking either of them in its *exclusive* sense. That is, conduct exclusively egoistic and exclusively altruistic does not come up to the ideal standard of morality, where all individuals must reap the same rewards and have the same obligations. The only conception, therefore, which can satisfy the mind is that of *universal* hedonism, which we shall intend to be expressed by the theory of utilitarianism. This conception shall be intended to express the common points of merit in both the others, so that the question of the *reference* of conduct to personality may be disposed of and we can turn attention wholly to the element of pleasure in it.

**3d. Arguments for Utilitarian Hedonism.**—As utilitarianism should be defined, it is the theory which makes utility the criterion and end of conduct, while utility is to be measured in terms of pleasure. We here assume that the reference to persons is understood and that the only utilitarianism which can stand any criticism at all must be that which tries to lay down rules for the good of the *whole*, and not for the good of the individual at the expense of others, nor for the good of the majority at the expense of the individual. This question once disposed of we have left only the more important matter, whether the hedonistic position, or the pursuit of pleasure, can be an adequate determination of morality. The supreme question is whether the hedonistic end

of conduct is the true one or not. We must examine carefully both sides of it.

1. THE FACT THAT ALL MEN SEEK PLEASURE AS A GOOD.—The extent to which men seek pleasure and avoid pain is an unquestionable fact, and it would seem to have no exceptions even in the case of martyrs and self-immolators, who in spite of their protestations seem to have some other than the immediate pleasures of the present world. They endure pain for some other reward which can only be called pleasure or happiness of some kind, if only for the satisfaction of living and dying for a principle. But apparent exceptions like these aside, it is a fact that happiness is so universally regarded, whatever our theories about it, that it would seem to be the one end to which all men subordinate everything else.

We use "pleasure" and "happiness" rather synonymously; not because a distinction between them cannot be drawn for certain purposes, but because the theory does not require it. "Pleasure" is often used to denote the agreeable emotion of the moment, following any particular action, while "happiness" is supposed to denote the calm and general satisfaction of life as a whole, which will be made up of adjusted and rational pleasures. But as happiness can only be the "sum of pleasures" or a series of adjusted satisfactions, it is still essentially "pleasure" in its nature, and we do not require at present to distinguish between present or momentary and deferred or permanent pleasures. Consequently the question here regards only the *kind* of thing desired, not the time, durability, or amount of it. Happiness and pleasure may, therefore, be used interchangeably.

- It hardly requires proof that men are largely influenced, if not wholly so, by pleasure in their conduct. It is so apparent to the most cursory observation that a denial of it, or an apparent exception, at once appears as a paradox. We have only to look around us, appeal to the experience and observation of every one we meet, and examine the ideals which men pursue, to see that pleasure is at the bottom of it all. Men seek wealth, honor, fame, power, knowledge, and cultivate art all for pleasure. Did these

possessions not conduce to happiness they would be scorned. It is only because they are indispensable means to a desired form of happiness that they prove attractive to man. Even the miser, who seems to seek wealth on its own account, does it for pleasure, only his pleasure is not found in spending and consuming it in vain show and waste, but in the consciousness of security and power against certain kinds of misfortune. The contest of life is for security against pain, and mankind looks ever to the resources which obtain the most satisfaction and prevent the most pain. "Nature," says Bentham in an eloquent passage, "has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. On the one hand, the standard of right and wrong, on the other, the chain of causes and effects, are fastened to their throne. They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think; every effort we can make to throw off our subjection will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it. In other words, a man may pretend to abjure their empire; but in reality he will remain subject to it all the while."

The argument throughout is intended to be more than a statement of the mere fact that man pursues pleasure or is under its dominion. It assumes or asserts also that everything else is subordinated to it. At the same time it is true that the utilitarian too often fails to distinguish between two distinct things in this connection, namely, the question of *fact* (de facto) and the question of *right* (de jure). He does not distinguish between the question regarding what man does pursue, and what it is ideal for him to pursue; between what he does and what he ought to do. But in showing what a constitutional place pleasure has in his life, and assuming that its nature, as a good, will not be denied, he simply goes on to discuss the question as if actual practice decided for us the ideal goal of human endeavor, and so intends to recognize, by his description of man's actual conduct and the subordination of all ordinary ends to happiness, the ideal and ultimate nature of pleasure as the good. The argument, then, is that experience so reflects the direction of all man's subor-



dinate ends to pleasure that we cannot but recognize it as the one end which determines the merit of conduct related to it. That is to say, men, rational men, pursue wealth, or fame, or honor, not for their own sake, but for the happiness or contentment which they bring, either directly or indirectly. It is only the irrational man that will make wealth an end in itself. In fact, such a man only appears to do so. His real object is also pleasure, and except for the means used he could not be distinguished from the spendthrift. Wherever we turn we find all paths of human endeavor leading to the same goal, happiness, and this end does not seem to serve any remoter purpose. On this account the utilitarian contends that it must be the highest good and standard of virtue, or of the quality of conduct.

2. THE COMMENSURABILITY OF PLEASURES.—One fact essential to utilitarian hedonism is the supposition that pleasures can differ only in *quantity* or intensity, and not in *quality* or intensity. Bentham and Epicurus both held that pleasures are all of the same kind, and that the differences we remark on the occasion of them are differences in the objects that cause them and not in the feelings themselves. That this is essential to the theory will be made clearer when we come to criticise it, but for the present we must remark that unless they are the same in their ultimate quality there is no possibility of measuring and comparing them so as to determine when one is to be sacrificed for another, involving a greater amount of good. The utilitarian must admit that there are actions bringing pleasure which he must avoid and condemn, and hence the fact raises the question whether it is possible under such conditions to regard pleasure as a criterion at all. But the utilitarian saves his position here by remarking that pleasure has various degrees of *intensity*, *purity*, *duration*, *certitude*, *propinquity*, and *fecundity*, all of which enable us to compare one pleasure with another and to reject that of the lesser degree for the greater. Thus the reason that intemperance is condemned in spite of the pleasures connected with it, is that these pleasures are not *pure*, or productive of future pleasure. They are mixed with pains either present or future, or are less intense than the pleas-

ures of temperance. On the other hand, the pleasures of temperance are purer, more intense, more durable and more prolific of future pleasure than intemperance. In the same way theft, murder, unchastity, inaccuracy, and any other wrong may be treated. Whatever pleasure they give is offset by the superior, intenser, purer and more prolific pleasure of their opposite virtues, which condemns them on that ground. The right lies in the direction of the purer and more intense pleasure, and all actions can be compared in this respect. They can be measured in terms of the quantity of pleasure in which they result, and this being the only common element of the various objects of desire, and determinable in its degrees, it offers the one scientific explanation and end of conduct.

3. THE EFFECT OF PLEASURE AND PAIN ON LIFE.—The effect of pleasure and pain on life has received a new form of statement and significance from the doctrine of evolution, though the general character of it is as old as speculation upon their importance. This can be brought out by a glance at the various conceptions of pleasure and pain. Plato and his contemporaries generally regarded pleasure as an incident in the harmony of healthy functions, or the index of healthy activity and pain the accompaniment of the opposite kind of action. We have here the general conception that pleasure is the result of healthy and adjusted action and pain of unhealthy and unadjusted action. Aristotle adopted the same general notion, and it was followed up by general acceptance until we find it again in writers like Spencer and Hamilton. The latter defines pleasure as "the reflex of unimpeded and pain, the reflex of impeded energy." Spencer holds that "pleasure increases life and pain decreases it." In all these there is the same notion, that pleasure results from right and pain from wrong action, so that they can very well be indices of what is proper and improper. What Mr. Spencer shows in his exposition of evolution is the enormous influence exercised by pleasure and pain upon the development and the perfection of life. Pleasure is a condition which conduces to higher and better exercise of function; pain represses it. Experiments seem to

show this effect, and every one is familiar with the fundamental maxim of the physician, which is that the patient must be kept, not only from physical pain and in pleasant physical condition, but also from mental pain and in a condition of cheerfulness and hopefulness. This is employing pleasure as a curative agent and shows how important a place it occupies in the economy of life. Illustrations might be multiplied indefinitely, but they would all have the same import, while the generalizations mentioned are sufficient to mark the value of pleasure and pain as objects of consciousness and to strengthen the claim of the utilitarian that they are the criteria and ends of conduct.

4. THE PRACTICAL EFFICIENCY OF PLEASURE AND PAIN AS MOTIVES TO CONDUCT.—The practical importance of taking pleasure and pain into account is very apparent in the use which is and can be made of them to affect right conduct. Even the opponents of utilitarianism concede that the most effective way to get duty performed is to reconcile it with happiness. If a man can be made to see that duty is less hard than he imagines; that it will compensate him in the attainment of more and better pleasure than the sacrifice of the moral law, he will be more easily induced to follow it. It is in this way that moralists, no matter of what school, always endeavor to secure right action, and in doing so, concede the superior power of the utilitarian ideal as a practical agent in the attainment of what is right. But whether they concede this or not, every day observation reveals the extent to which it is true, that pleasure and pain may be appealed to as incentives to right action, the one of pursuit and the other of aversion, the pursuit of the right and aversion to wrong. The whole social fabric rests upon this principle. Rewards and punishments would mean absolutely nothing and be wholly inefficient if this principle were not true. The adjustment of pleasures and pains by law to meet the various conditions of character, temper, and habit is only the regulation of conduct by the hedonistic measure as opposed to any other conception of moral influence. In fact, the utilitarian conception of morality is simply that it conceals this reference to pleasure and pain by being too often identified

with the supposed conflict between duty and interest, which is in reality but a conflict between two interests of a different degree or order. However this may be, the whole social and political organism is based upon the infirmity of every other motive to action than pleasure and pain, and shows that what we call morality must be expressed in terms of happiness before any strong inducements can be felt to realize it.

5. *THE INCONSISTENCIES OF OPPONENTS TO THE THEORY.*—Among the first of these inconsistencies is the extent to which the bitterest antagonists of utilitarianism are influenced by the love of pleasure and fear of pain in the common affairs of life. A man eats an apple and is governed by its agreeable or disagreeable taste in selecting it. If he goes to a picnic, on an excursion or a holiday vacation, he takes no account of anything but the pleasure which he expects. If such actions resulted in pain to himself or to others, he would condemn them and never think of taking into account any conception but pleasure and pain. Everywhere but in our theory of morality we thus show a supreme regard for pleasure and aversion to pain. We never think of the inconsistency between our practice and what our transcendental theory demands or seems to demand of us, and if called upon to make ourselves consistent the theory would be the first thing sacrificed. All the little affairs of life, too often supposed to be outside the sphere of morality, are so involved in judgments regarding pleasure and pain, that once their determination by that quality, and at the same time their morality, are conceded, they become too much identified with the criterion of happiness to escape dependence upon the utilitarian code.

Another inconsistency supports the same conclusion. The most uncompromising opponents of utilitarian hedonism in modern times have been the religious and theological minds. The majority of them, however, and we might say religious laymen universally, while speaking with contempt of the pursuit of pleasure, have quite uniformly regulated their lives by the hopes of happiness hereafter. Their opposition to pleasure turns out to be only an opposition to certain pleasures of this world and

not to pleasure in itself. They love the pleasures of the next world as much as any one could the pleasures of this. To oppose utilitarianism they would have to insist that pleasures differ in kind and not merely in degree, and that the pleasures of the hereafter are wholly unlike those of the present world in kind. But this would wholly shut off a comparison and practically imply that the term "pleasure" could not apply to the two states at the same time, while the manifest conclusion from applying the same term to the two conditions would be that the pleasures were the same in kind, and this would only conceal their utilitarianism in their doctrine of immortality while inveighing against it in language. This inconsistency, however, is not chargeable to the religious mind previous to Bentham and Mill, because it was identified with the utilitarian principle. But ever since utilitarianism came to be the property of the skeptics, the antagonism developed in the religious field was carried over to the moral, and this inconsistency appeared with it. Happiness of the hereafter was exchanged for that of the present, while the identity of principle involved in both was concealed in the difference of conditions, but not in the state of consciousness to be realized. Hence the supreme value placed by the religionist upon eternal happiness, and his unwillingness to sacrifice it at the behest of any theory of virtue demanding a disregard for immortality, were only proofs that the moral ideal was that of the utilitarian; only that it embraced eternity rather than the present, and purchased at the expense of the present in most cases. Moreover, if most men were asked what their ideal object in existence was or would be; they would no doubt spontaneously answer with the religious mind that it would be a condition of supreme happiness or bliss of some kind. They would differ in regard to the objects that would produce it. The old Norseman would long for Valhalla with its mead and phantom battles, in which phantom heroes are forever hewing down shadows which only rise again to renew their ceaseless and bloodless conflicts. The mythological Greek would have the return of the golden age, or the enjoyment of the garden of

Hesperides, or some Elysium which would be free from care and toil and pain. The Christian would have the New Jerusalem, paved with gold and enriched by every adornment that ever fascinated an Oriental imagination, or he might refine this purely materialistic conception into a spiritual communion with God, the bliss of a mind wholly at peace with its maker. The Indian would express it in the happy hunting-ground beyond the grave, and the Australian savage, according to Mr. Spencer, realizing the value of English money and the beauty of English complexion, would desire "to wake up in the resurrection a white man and to have plenty of sixpences." But in all of these there is one common element which measures for each individual and class involved the value of his ideal, and that is the magnified and purified happiness which all would expect to realize in that state. The utilitarian principle is at the basis of all of them, and any supposition of different motives is only an illusion.

**4th. The Arguments against Utilitarian Hedonism.**—The criticism of utilitarianism will involve the consideration of some views which were not considered in the arguments for it, notably the views of Mill and his school, because their position, while intended for the defense of the doctrine, were really an abandonment of it. This will be brought out in the proper place. Moreover, we must also remark an important fact in the discussion which has considerable bearing upon our mode of treating the subject. It is the difference between the demands of science and those of "common sense" in the question whether pleasure is the highest good or not. There is often a feeling, fostered by utilitarians themselves, that there is some prejudice, religious, moral, or æsthetic, against the doctrine of utility, presumably on account of its low and materialistic associations. This is, no doubt, true in many cases, even deplorably true when utilitarians are not to blame for it. But it is only an accident of the controversy, not any essential part of it. The scientific question, which can be conducted with the utmost calm and freedom from prejudice one way or the other, is simply whether it is a fact that pleasure or happiness is the only ultimate end of human action.

The practical value of taking it into account will always remain, no matter what decision we come to about the above question. Science wishes to know exactly what is true in the case, and after this is determined it may give its attention to the various practical interests and sympathies involved or affiliated with the general question. Careful analysis may show truth on both sides, and for that reason we ask dispassionate attention to the arguments against the doctrine, not necessarily with a view to an ignominious overthrow of it, but with the object of showing just what is tenable and what is not tenable in the theory. The main purpose or sequel of our criticism, therefore, will be analysis.

The scientific question, besides the general analysis which it demands, also asks for a careful discrimination between several distinct problems in the case, which are too often confused with each other. These can be expressed in the following manner: (a) Do men as a fact always seek pleasure or happiness and avoid pain as the *sole* object of volition? (b) Granting that pleasure is the universal object of pursuit, does this fact prove that it is an object of obligation or that it ought to be sought? (c) Assuming that happiness is the object which *ought* to be desired, can any such a criterion of right be applied in practice? (d) Assuming, finally, that it can be applied in practice, does the conception yield any such a code of morality as civilized man has actually adopted?

All that requires to be said of these propositions is, that if the first be affirmed, additional proof is required for the second. Every theory of ethics must determine the *ideal*, what *ought* to be, not merely the *real* or what *is*. If men universally seek happiness only, and if happiness be the ideal end of action, then there is no use in laying down an obligation to pursue it, because a duty implies either the possibility or an inclination not to seek a given end. If men actually seek it, there is nothing for ethics to do. On the other hand, to deny the first question is to cut up the utilitarian theory by the roots. For if pleasure is not the only end pursued by man, it is not the only ideal, and may be purely subordinate to something else. The coexistence of any

other object of volition than happiness, actually pursued, must nullify utilitarianism, because it is conditioned upon the ideality of pleasure alone, whether actually sought or not. The second proposition also shows that much more has to be done than to show that men universally seek happiness. They may do this and yet may not seek the morally ideal. The utilitarian must prove the morally ideal nature of happiness and not merely the universality of man's pursuit of it. The third question brings up a problem that we have to consider, and it is whether pleasure is a practical criterion of virtue, even if we assume that it is an ultimate good, or a necessary element of it. The conception may be so abstract as to prevent it from having any direct application to concrete and individual cases. The last question implies that even if the previous assumptions are proved in the second and third questions it is still open to consider whether they coincide with the actually existing code of morality. The question is not whether happiness is ideal and practical as a criterion of virtue, but whether it is the *sole* element of the code which we recognize as moral. All these various points of view show that there is a very complex problem before us, and not to be solved merely by pointing to universal practice.

There is another difficulty which the critic of utilitarianism has to meet, and it may as well be frankly acknowledged. It must not be shirked by any one. Opponents of the theory have always admitted that happiness is a necessary accompaniment of virtue. While they have spoken very firmly about the duty to disregard consequences, they have readily enough granted that the reward of virtue included a happiness much higher and better than the reward of vice, and even when proclaiming that virtue is its own reward they would not deny that it is necessarily, or at least in a perfect world, accompanied by pleasure. Now, if happiness always be a concomitant of virtue, if it always be the natural consequence of morality, it is impossible to give any *objective* disproof of utilitarianism. As long as pleasure invariably accompanies any other fact we cannot prove that it is not the object of volition. It might not be the real object of



desire and choice, but its presence with that object would leave nothing but the testimony of the individual consciousness to prove what the true object was. In the majority of cases this testimony would undoubtedly favor pleasure, while those who denied it would be open to the suspicion either of illusion, of ignorance, or of obstinacy in favor of a pet theory. The only absolute proof of moralism as opposed to utilitarianism would be the existence of an ideal condition, or the ultimate issue of duty, without any accompaniment of pleasure. This being the case, and all persons acknowledging that happiness is the natural consequence of duty, the only arguments against utilitarian hedonism are those which are more or less indirect and which appeal to the individual moral sense for evidence as to what the real moral ideal is, and as to what satisfies reason and conscience in the matter of the highest good. With this understanding of the problem, and of the fact that the main object of the criticism must be analysis, we may proceed to give the arguments against utilitarianism.

1. THE INDEFINITE AND ABSTRACT NATURE OF PLEASURE AS A CONCEPTION.—One of the main difficulties with pleasure as an object of volition is that the term has become so general and abstract as to describe the consequences of actions without regard to their moral quality. No one is ever certain what pleasure we mean when we undertake to measure conduct by it. The term applies equally to the consequences of vice and virtue in many cases. Intemperance as well as temperance may have its pleasures, and perhaps it is only an *a priori* opinion that pain must inevitably result from an act of intemperance. But, however this may be, pleasure is so indefinite in its meaning, even when supposing that it is always the same in kind, that as a criterion of right we cannot distinguish between the merits of eating and the merits of patriotism, or the merit of taking a holiday and of saving some one from drowning. We distinguish between the worth of noble statesmanship and the enjoyments of a picnic, but the mere word pleasure will not enable us to determine that distinction. It describes the same phenomenon in both cases. The

pleasure *qua* pleasure is the same in each of them, and we have to specify some added quality or qualification of pleasure in order to explain our preference of one over the other of these acts. The term is purely an abstract one. It describes a feeling or set of feelings without regard to the incidents, causes, or objects connected with it, while morality cannot lose sight of the concrete conditions connected with happiness. If pleasure is to be taken into account at all, it must be in connection with the particular act or object which causes it. It is not any and every pleasure, so to speak, but the pleasure of certain actions that we must take into account. For instance, it is not the pleasures of malice that I can indulge with moral impunity or approval, but only the pleasures of respecting human life and rights. Hence the moral ideal requires to reckon with more than pleasure in the abstract. We have to include the incidents or objects of it as part and parcel of the criterion demanded. They may express some added quality other than pleasure, or such a qualification of it as prevents the term from having any practical application to life as we know it. Nor is it any defense to say that the utilitarian theory is not based upon pleasure in the abstract, but that it means pleasure of a certain purity, fertility, durability, and propinquity, because this only makes the matter more dubious and indefinite. These qualities of pleasure are not definable at all. No one can say when a pleasure will be pure or fertile or durable. While this may save the theoretical consistency of the doctrine, it only renders it all the more impracticable by adding greater indefiniteness to the idea upon which it is based, and hence does not furnish a specific conception for making the doctrine intelligible and satisfying the demands of morality. Pleasure is at most the name only for the end or consequence of conduct, not for the *means* to it, and morality cannot lose sight of the means. In taking account of the means to an end, morality keeps its attention upon the idea of law, moral law, or a uniform mode of action without regard to immediate consequences when more important remoter consequences are at stake. Pleasure without qualification will not distinguish between them, being so

indefinite and abstract as to connote the consequences of any act whatever. The moral ideal, therefore, cannot be expressed by that term without qualification. The utmost that can be maintained is that the highest good must at least contain happiness, whatever else is necessary to meet the claims of morality. This may be true, but it wholly nullifies utilitarianism, which must stand upon pleasure alone and without qualification other than purity, fertility, durability, etc., which only conceals the abandonment of the one thing necessary to make morality intelligible; namely, a specific conception equal to the quality expressed by it. In brief, pleasure or happiness is so indefinite and abstract a conception as to supply no practical criterion of virtue, and hence requires to be supplemented by some other element in order to make the highest good intelligible and practical.

## 2. THE INCOMMENSURABILITY OF PLEASURES AND PAINS.—

As we have seen, utilitarianism asserts that pleasures differ only in degree or quantity and that they are commensurable. On the contrary, it may be maintained that, even if they differ only in degree of intensity and purity, they are not commensurable in any sense that would make happiness a criterion of right and wrong. How is it possible to measure the pleasure which one man takes in eating with the pleasure another takes in upholding the laws? Which will be the more intense or the purer? According to the utilitarian standard the intenser, purer, and more fertile pleasure is to be chosen rather than that with less of these characteristics. Well, it may give one man more pleasure to steal than to act honestly, and intensity being the criterion there is nothing to be said against it. The man who desires it is the supreme judge. Nor is it any reply to say that the laws of society prevent stealing from being an intense or pure pleasure, because these laws have no right to existence until they have conformed to the principles which the utilitarian lays down. Pleasure being the standard, the laws must not countermine it, but must conform to it. Laws depend upon morality for their authority and legitimacy, and do not make it, and hence have no right to determine the pleasure which is to be their basis.

Consequently, if pleasure or feeling is to be the standard of what is right, it would seem that every man must be his own judge of it, because he can be the only judge of what gives him pain or pleasure. The gratification of the physical appetites may give one man more pleasure than the study of science or art, and *vice versa*. A may prefer vagabondage to honest labor, and B hard work and wealth to a life of leisure or idleness. One man's pleasure cannot be measured in terms of another's. What gives one pleasure will give another pain. Scarcely any two persons can be made to agree upon their choice on this account. This would indicate that, pleasure being the object of volition and standard of right and wrong, every man would be a law to himself, and such a thing as morality *binding upon all persons alike* would be impossible. The fundamental characteristic of morality is that it shall be universally binding upon rational beings, but with the incommensurable nature of pleasures, as compared in different persons, this condition is flatly impossible. Nor is the case helped by saying that each man can compare his own feelings and determine the purer and higher pleasures, for even if this be true, it is not an *objective* mensuration of pleasures, which is the condition demanded. It leaves every individual a law to himself, when each man differs from every other, which is the very opposite of morality. We can determine the degree or quantity of any phenomenon when it displays a given uniformity with the causes or objects which produce it, such as the pressure of steam, the pressure of the air, the force of gravity, the force of impact, the intensity of sensation to some extent, and any other result definitely related to its antecedents. But it is not so with pleasures, which, besides varying between individuals, are complicated with all sorts of subjective difficulties if we come to ask each man to tell their comparative amounts. No commensuration is possible which science can respect. The utmost that we can do is to describe the choice of one rather than another as a preference which is quite as consistent with a difference of kind as a difference of degree, and we should not mistake that description for an implication of commensurability. It is all a question

whether there is any measure for pleasures which can definitely determine their rank in comparison with each other; whether there is any means apart from individual caprice and taste for deciding how pleasures compare with each other. Until there is such, the commensurability of feeling is impossible and the utilitarian standard goes by default of ability to meet the demands which it makes itself upon ethical theories.

3. THE FATALITY OF ADMITTING QUALITATIVE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PLEASURES.—Bentham did not admit that pleasures differed in kind. On the contrary, he asserted that they differed in degree only. But mankind have so uniformly maintained that the distinction between right and wrong was one of kind, and not merely of degree, that Mill, Stephen, and other later utilitarians have tried to save the theory by holding that pleasures differ in quality as well as in quantity. Says Mr. Stephen, "even an infant distinguishes between its love for its cousin and its love for jam tart." This is a flat contradiction of Bentham, who quite as clearly and acutely observes that so far as the pleasure is concerned there is no difference between pushpin and poetry. But this conception was so far from coinciding with the qualitative distinction between right and wrong, that Mill and Stephen thought to satisfy the mind by affirming qualitative as well as quantitative distinctions between pleasures. Mill's direct language is as follows :

"It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognize the fact that some *kinds* of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others. It would be absurd that while, in estimating all other things, quality is considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasures should be supposed to depend on quantity alone.

"If I am asked what I mean by difference of quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount, there is but one possible answer. Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation

to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure. If one of the two is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of, we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality, so far outweighing quantity as to render it, in comparison, of small account."

Put plainly, this is simply saying that the pleasures of appetite are different in kind as well as degree from the pleasures of knowledge, so that the merit of pursuing the latter compared with the former depends wholly upon the difference of quality in the pleasures. Similarly the moral difference between malice and respect, theft and honesty, avarice and generosity, deceit and veracity, selfishness and conscientiousness, is the difference in quality of the pleasures that accompany them. According to this it is not the difference in quantity, but the difference in quality of pleasure that distinguishes between the character of lying and the character of truthfulness. This seems a very plausible solution of the problem, but it is nevertheless an entire abandonment of utilitarianism and its principles. The name, of course, is retained, but the thing itself is abandoned. We must make this clear.

First, all utilitarianism previous to Mill was based upon the notion that pleasure was the same in kind and that the forms of it differed only in degree. The adoption of Mill's doctrine of qualitative differences was an abandonment of this position. Second, in Bentham's theory "pleasure" was a *generic* term comprehending qualitatively every case of its occurrence, and actions did not differ in their quality, but only in the degree of pleasure and pain incident to them. But in Mill's doctrine "pleasure" is not only a generic term, but that "pleasure" which determines the right is *specific* and denotes a quality which is not found in the same term generically taken. Now, this view of it is a contradiction. If "pleasure" denote the satisfaction

or agreeable feelings that follow actions without distinction of kind, then it is not the pleasure that makes the distinction. On the other hand, if it be the pleasure that determines the distinction between right and wrong, then this term cannot apply to the agreeable feelings that accompany wrong actions. In other words, pleasures cannot have differences of kind. Again, if pleasure denotes agreeable feeling wherever it occurs, and without regard to distinction between moral and immoral conduct, then *the quality that determines that distinction is other than pleasure*. On the other hand, if that quality is pleasure, there is no difference in kind, and those are not pleasures which accompany wrong actions. We cannot play fast and loose with the term pleasure. We cannot give it a generic and a specific use at the same time. We only succeed in duping ourselves and others into the bargain. No theory can stand upon an equivocation, and this is precisely what utilitarianism attempts to do when it talks about the "kinds of pleasure." As a loose and popular phrase it may be well enough. But it can only serve as an inaccurate substitute for a desired term which shall express *pleasure plus a quality other than pleasure*, if pleasure is to express the whole class of species included under its usual application. The true meaning of the term is generic in which it expresses the common qualities of a class whose differentiae are other than the genus (conferentia). This is putting the case technically, but the same may be expressed by saying that pleasure expresses what is similar in all the cases in which it occurs, while the so-called differences in kind express something other than the pleasure in order to determine the qualitative distinctions of the species. Mr. Martineau expresses this conception of the case very clearly and pertinently. His language is worth quoting. "If there are *sorts* of pleasure," he says, "they must be something more than pleasure; each must have its *differentia* added on to what suffices for the genus; and this addition cannot be *pleasurable quality*, else it would not detach anything from the genus; to mark a species at all, it must be an *extra-hedonistic quality*, and each sort must have its own; and so far as one is

preferable, as a kind, to another, it is so in virtue of what has *other than pleasure*; and the comparison of them all *inter se*, considered as different kinds, must turn upon their several extra-hedonistic qualities. All that they have from the genus is quantitative; and till you get beyond the pleasurable as such, quality does not exist."

#### 4. THE QUALITATIVE NATURE OF MORAL DISTINCTIONS.—

We have seen that qualitative distinctions between pleasures cannot be admitted without giving up utilitarianism, and it remains to be seen whether moral distinctions can be determined merely by quantitative differences between pleasures and thus save utilitarian doctrine. If pleasure be the same in kind, as it must in order to describe agreeable feeling wherever experienced, the only differences which can give rise to moral distinctions, the difference between virtue and vice, must be those of degree; namely, of purity, of intensity, of fecundity, of durability, and of propinquity. But it was precisely the conviction, so strongly intrenched in the consciousness of mankind, that morality represented a qualitative distinction from immorality, which induced Mill and others to proclaim a difference in kind in pleasures, in order to meet the demands of an overwhelming belief. We think this belief is correct and ineradicable. It may not be easy to prove, but it has in its support such a degree of unanimity as must make any one pause who wishes to deny it. Moreover, since pleasure and pain differ in degree and not in kind, and since the distinction between morality and immorality does not coincide absolutely with this difference, as it ought to do in a consistent theory making pleasure the criterion of right and pain of wrong, the impossibility of making different quantities of pleasure determine that which ought to be determined by pain should be quite apparent to every one. The distinction between pleasure and pain must be quite as qualitative as that between the moral and the immoral, and if so, it is impossible to make pleasure and pain their criteria, and at the same time to reduce the distinction to differences of quantity in pleasure. Nor will it avail to fall back upon the mixed and



impure character of the pleasures in some cases, because there are instances in which both acts, as the gratification of appetite and the pursuit of knowledge, may give pure pleasures, and yet a qualitative difference of merit may exist. Hence there is nothing to do but to maintain the utter incompatibility between the qualitative distinctions of morality and the purely quantitative differences of feeling upon which utilitarianism relies to establish them. This conclusion does not exclude the presence of pleasure as an element of the ideal, but it does exclude that datum from being the only and most important constituent of it. That is all that it is necessary to establish in order to show the deficiency of utilitarian hedonism as an ethical theory.

5. THE SUBORDINATION OF PLEASURE AND PAIN TO OTHER ENDS THAN THEMSELVES.—We referred to Mr. Spencer's doctrine of pleasure and pain in the economy of evolution as a fact in favor of utilitarianism, though we were careful to indicate that it was rather in favor of taking them into account than of making them ultimate ends. Mr. Spencer, however, intends his doctrine, that pleasure increases life and pain decreases it, to support utilitarianism. This is an illusion on his part. For he wholly forgets that utilitarianism is conditioned wholly by the conception that pleasure is the *end*, the highest end of conduct, and not merely a *means* to an end. But in showing that pleasure as a phenomenon of consciousness increases life, or develops and perfects the organism, physical or psychical, and that pain decreases it, he abandons the notion that pleasure is the end, and sets up life, the organism, or perfection as the end, while pleasure is a mere *means* to it. Pleasure becomes a purely subordinate event in the economy of nature; it may be an important one and to be taken into account as an index to the right goal, but it is in that conception no part of the goal or end to be sought. It happens to be a natural phenomenon which only points the way to an end not itself, and which serves to direct the subject when his reason may not have informed him of the right. However this may be, we cannot consider pleasure and pain as instruments to an effect

without giving up the notion that they are the *ultimate* objects of volition. The truth of Mr. Spencer's position is purchased at the expense of utilitarianism. Pleasure cannot be both the ultimate end of conduct and a means to some other result than itself. It can be only one or the other.

6. GENERAL DEFECTS.—There are several difficulties in the utilitarian theory which are either corollaries and incidents of those already mentioned, or are less important and too general to be classified separately and may as well be comprehended as general defects. In the first place, while the appeal to pleasure or happiness has considerable practical efficiency when duty and interest coincide, it gives rise to much casuistry and tampering with conscience whenever we are made to feel that its pursuit is harmless under all circumstances. Nothing so weakens the monitions of conscience as the belief that concessions may or must always be made to pleasure in choosing our course of conduct. It is equivalent to offering us two guides who do not always go the same way. Then again, this practical efficiency of utilitarianism can be very much exaggerated. It has the effect of concentrating attention upon the feelings to be satisfied rather than upon the way they are to be satisfied; namely, upon the functions of reason and deliberation and the *conditions* of the highest good. When pressed, the theory recognizes these elements, but they do not appear upon the surface. Consequently it has very little place for what is known as moral insight and duty, unless they coincide with happiness, while moralism emphasizes these and leaves happiness to be attained without aiming at it as the only end to be achieved.

Still another objection is that utilitarianism diverts attention from the conditions of happiness to the feelings, which avails to create the tendency to seek pleasure by whatever means it may be attained and so to encourage short-sightedness. This is apparent from an illustration which will test the theory of utilitarianism to the uttermost. It is quite evident that the appeal to the individual's happiness is a strong one. But this is in constant danger of degenerating into egoism, which no utilita-

rian will admit. Even Bentham, in spite of his strong individualistic tendency, insisted that the happiness which should be the measure of right must be of the greatest number, and all later utilitarianism has been emphatically altruistic in its principles. Besides having less practical efficiency than the egoistic form, so far as obtaining obedience is concerned, unless the altruistic instincts predominate, this form of the doctrine can only mean that we should aim at the happiness of others as well as our own. This sounds very well and falls into line with our social and sympathetic instincts. But both its theoretical and practical defects are clearly seen in modern sentimental charity. The sole aim of much modern, as nearly all earlier, charity, was to make the beneficiary happy, and it succeeds. But it does not moralize the recipient, as all scientific students of the problem have to confess. If happiness, however, be the standard of right, there is no disputing the morality of indiscriminate charity; for the donor is altruistic and the recipient is made happy. Indeed, it will not do to say that remoter pain and evil follow such conduct, because the vagabond never is so happy as when he gets all he wants without labor, and never so unhappy as when he must work. The giver of alms is fulfilling all the conditions of utilitarianism when he aims at others' happiness, and he attains his own, whether selfishly sought or not, when he does an act of charity. But it is interesting to note that all students of this problem, and among them utilitarians themselves, have to condemn actions of this kind, and not merely because pain somewhere and sometime follows from foolish benevolence, but because such a course violates the conditions of perfect life. No better illustration could be chosen to show that unselfish happiness is the end of the agent, and yet has to be condemned as an unmitigated evil. The fact is that true charity must aim, not at the happiness of the person to whom benevolence is granted, but at the establishment of conditions under which happiness can be won and earned by the beneficiary himself, and if he will not live up to those conditions the pain which follows, so far from being an evil, is a good. However this may be, it is not happi-

ness which we should aim at, but a certain order which is the condition of it to those whose conduct deserves it, and the moral judgment in regard to charity is the best illustration of this doctrine.

Utilitarians have often shown an unconscious tendency to accept this point of view and to abandon their principles by a doctrine which they avow without the slightest trace of their knowing what it means. This is another of their defective claims. For instance, Mill, Spencer, and Sidgwick agree in affirming that although happiness is the ultimate end of conduct, we should not directly aim at it. They hold that it can best be attained in an indirect manner. In this view virtue consists, not in directly aiming at happiness, but in aiming at certain forms of conduct and conditions which naturally result in happiness. This Mr. Sidgwick calls the paradox of hedonism, and Mr. Spencer defends it with much care and earnestness. But it ought to be apparent to every one that it is a very queer ideal or end at which men should not aim, and yet which is the condition of virtue. All morality supposes that men should aim at the highest good ; the moral ideal exists to be sought, to be the object of all our aims, and hence it is certainly very curious to tell us that happiness is the highest good, and yet should not be the immediate object of volition. A good which should not be aimed at, but which is to be attained by turning away from it, is certainly an anomaly in speculation, and it is certainly a very humorous piece of unconscious irony to call such a doctrine a paradox ; for it is a great deal more than a paradox. It is an absurdity. The highest good is to be directly sought or it is not the highest good at all. The trouble with the utilitarians at this point is that they are reluctant to abandon the consideration of happiness, and yet they see that true moral purpose aims at something else than happiness, though it does not sacrifice it in the last analysis. In asserting this "paradox" the utilitarian is becoming aware of the fact that morality has to do with a certain order of the world which is accompanied by happiness, but is more than happiness at the same time ; but he has not seen his

way clear to abandoning the traditional formula of his theory. He is too anxious to hug the associations of pleasure while recognizing the value of aiming at something else. Indirection in morality is worse than an anomaly. It is an abandonment of the very principle which ethics endeavors to establish; namely, the constant and earnest pursuit of the ideal which is to be held directly before the eye of conscience and pursued on its own account, not as an end to be gained by stealth and circumambulation. A target which is to be hit by *not* aiming at it is either not a target at all or it is a bad reflection upon the character and condition of the marksman. And yet utilitarians can be found who do not detect the illusion in this conception of their case. In spite of it, however, their position is a tribute to their natural moral insight which is in most cases better than their theory, and which in this instance points to a standard of morality quite different from that of pleasure.

It is at this point that another distinct weakness of the theory appears. When we ask a man who is conscientious, who is governed wholly by his sense of duty, what his motive is, he will be the last person in the world to avow a love of pleasure as his passion. He will name anything except pleasure. No doubt the consciousness of many, if not the majority of mankind, would testify that the motives of their conduct were for happiness, but this would be when they were not concerned about the moral or immoral nature of their conduct, or when they did not feel the pressure of conscience. Persons without any specific moral purpose would invariably avow this. But the moment we come to a strictly conscientious mind we should find pleasure or happiness retreating into the background, and the sense of duty, which however much it may be accompanied by self-satisfaction in the form of happiness, points sternly to an end that keeps pleasure out of sight. Hence the consciousness of the normal person who is striving to attain morality betrays no traces of a direct influence from happiness alone, but shows an ideal order of things which, however much it results in pleasure, does not have that factor as the only element of its constitution.

**V. EXAMINATION OF MORALISM.**—The very common feeling that utility and morality are not convertible terms requires that we try some other conception than hedonism for an ethical theory, and the term "Moralism" supplies this want, as expressing a unique and distinct idea, embodying all that the human mind has endeavored to denote by ideas claiming a lineage superior to mere pleasure. Whether the point of view can be justified is another question. But there is certainly need for a descriptive name for that attitude of mind which is not satisfied with utilitarianism, and the term "Moralism" is the only one which will suit the emergency.

But, as we have already seen, there are two forms of the theory which are in some respects distinct from each other and possess different merits and demerits. We shall, therefore, have to treat the subject in terms of these two points of view. They are Perfectionism and Formalism.

**1st. Criticism of Perfectionism.**—The peculiar nature of perfectionism as a theory is that it proposes, on the one hand, an end distinct from mere feeling, and on the other hand, an end apart from the mere feeling of duty. It shuts out utilitarian hedonism by proposing excellence of being as the proper object of moral volition. This excellence means the perfection of every function of man's nature which is necessary to an orderly and ideal world, and thus describes an *objective* end, while utilitarianism seems rational or plausible only when the end is *subjective*, since we found objective happiness as an end to be absurd. But perfectionism proposes excellence which may be either subjective or objective or both, and satisfies the mind's notion of an ideal condition which is more than happiness while including it at the same time. So much for what the theory is. The examination of it must follow.

**1. DIFFICULTIES OF PERFECTIONISM.**—It can be charged that the conception of perfection is so indefinite and abstract that it is no better than pleasure as a standard of right and wrong. This criticism is undoubtedly true, to some extent at least. It is possible to conceive ourselves speaking about the perfection of

this or that function or tendency which on examination proves to be wholly evil. Then as the term does not specify what perfection, or the perfection of any particular function, it seems to comprehend within its range the perfection of good and evil instincts and qualities alike. Apart from what the term usually means this is an undoubted difficulty. But the abstractness and indefiniteness of the term can be very much exaggerated. So far as its meaning is concerned it is not so necessary to specify particulars in the case, because when used it applies *not to some specific function, but to all functions acting in harmony*. This makes it a very different term from pleasure, which denotes only one element of being or consciousness. Taken in reference to any specific function of being, alone, it would be quite as objectionable as pleasure. But its real import is not only an ideal condition of being, whether of self, of others, or of the world, but also includes definitely the notion of a harmonious adjustment of all functions in the agent or order concerned. It is only the etymological and loose sense of the term that gives any trouble; the historical and logical import of it, as found in those who define and maintain the theory, is perfectly clear, and that is the realization of an order, subjective or objective, which satisfies the sense of the ideal in *all* the functions of being. We admit that the conception still has its indefiniteness, but it is only such as must belong to all theories, which require explanation and definition in detail in order to develop their full meaning. Nor, in presenting perfection as a superior standard to pleasure, do we mean to exclude pleasure from a place in the complex object of volition. It is possible to maintain that pleasure has *critical* (*ratio cognoscendi*) and perfection *teleological* (*ratio agendi*) meaning in the complex matter of conduct, and that the two are complementary functions of the same ideal. This would save unnecessary antagonism between the two theories, and at the same time do justice to the common feeling that a state or quality of being is a better representative of the ideal than feeling, while not excluding it.

2. MERITS OF PERFECTIONISM.—Whatever the difficulties of

the idea of perfection as an ethical standard, it has some important merits which commend it very highly in comparison with pleasure. They may be summed up in two characteristics, (a) *Ideality* and (b) *Objectivity*. Expressed in less technical terms, they are purity of value and a worth which may be more than individual and personal interest. The importance of the first of these lies in the fact that no one, not even the utilitarian, can object to perfection as an unworthy end to pursue. The utmost that the utilitarian can claim is either that perfection must be a means to happiness or that happiness is the standard by which we determine perfection. But he cannot claim that perfection is in any case an unworthy object of volition as can be asserted against pleasure without qualification. It stands as an unquestioned ideal, and it only remains to show that it is ultimate and not a mere means to some other end. That it is not a mere means to happiness is evident from Mr. Spencer's position in regard to pleasure increasing life. In fact, the whole doctrine of evolution lays the stress upon development of function, organism, or perfection of structure and of type rather than upon the realization of merely ephemeral feelings. It is founded upon excellence of being rather than any other end. Happiness is an inevitable concomitant of this effect, but it is not the end of it. It is one of the incidents of that condition, just as the other functions of consciousness are, and which would be better in that state than without it, and yet are not the only elements of the highest good. Again, however plausible it may seem to say that perfection exists for the sake of happiness, and is thus subordinated to it, it is much more clear that our sense of ideality would not be satisfied by happiness without perfection, which goes to show that perfection is not merely a means to pleasure, but a coexistent element of the ideal, which is made up of neither perfection nor happiness alone, but of both of them. We should probably not care for either of them without the other. Certain it is, however, that the moral ideal would not be complete without perfection, which only proves the insufficiency of happiness.

In regard to the second characteristic little needs to be said.



Pleasure, we found, could only be a phenomenon experienced either by the subject of the act, in which case there is the constant danger of egoism, or by the person upon whom the act falls, in which case the moral ideal is incomplete. But perfection involves a condition of things that is not necessarily limited to persons, although only persons can have an interest in it. But its extra-personal character as a part of the ideal deprives it of the exposure to egoism and satisfies the sense of the moral ideal by an end which is either wholly disinterested or involves the development of the individual so closely with the solidarity of the race that there is a perpetual check upon the abuse of this point of view. Hence perfectionism is free from the most important difficulties of hedonism, while it admittedly presents a moral ideal to be attained.

**2d. Criticism of Formalism.**—Formalism is expressed in the formula "duty for duty's sake," "duty without regard to consequences," "obedience to law," etc. In all these it demands obedience to the categorical imperative as sufficient to meet the requirements of morality. It seems to disregard every other end than conformity to the formal law of duty. This law is the right direction of the will and does not require aiming at any end external to the will itself. Kant was the most celebrated advocate of this theory, though it has also been the property of most intuitionists and all who make morality to consist wholly in the motive of conduct. But Kant states the case as clearly as it can be stated. The only absolute good which he would recognize was the good will. "Nothing can possibly be conceived," he says, "in the world or out of it, which can be called good without qualification except a good will." What this means is apparent when he goes on to show that the will is not good because of what it effects outside of itself; that is, not because of any end outside of itself, but because of its conformity to the categorical imperative or action from the sense of duty. This was the reason that he wholly excluded pleasure from the place of a moral good. Besides being a necessary object of desire it was held to be an end foreign to the will; that is, not an end which

could be freely determined by the subject. Hence it could not be an object of moral volition. But the only thing which could be a motive to moral action after asserting this limitation was the naked moral law, "the idea of law itself," or action from the sense of duty alone. No end is to be aimed at but this right direction of the will, and Kant expressed his abstract law of duty in the formula: "So act that the law of your will can be valid as a universal law of legislation." This conception was modified as the development of the system progressed, but its earliest enunciation was in this abstract form which, when applied, indicates no material end to be realized except self-consistency. This is the reason that the law is purely a formal one and gives rise to the point of view as we have denominated it.

1. DIFFICULTIES OF FORMALISM.—The fundamental difficulty with which this theory has to contend is its one-sidedness. It seems wholly to ignore every material and practical end of conduct. That the moral law, without regard to happiness, perfection, or other object, should be its own end seems worse than a paradox and to propose an end only in appearance. That we should wholly disregard consequences seems a travesty upon moral law. The popular feeling about making morality merely a question of motives and nothing else has been very tersely embodied in the adage that "hell is paved with good intentions;" and it must be confessed that it hardly suffices for our notion of morality that a man should do no more than mean well. Good will cannot cancel a debt or pay damages for an injury. It may be a condition of effecting such action where civil law does not act, but merely good intentions will not absolve the agent from obligations involving material considerations. Taking human life, destroying property, or committing theft under cover of duty does not receive much favor from any one, even from the defender of formal morality. We long ago learned that conduct to be moral must have an end in view, and it does not satisfy us to say that good motives are the only end to be sought. They are desirable, but they are not the whole matter of morality. We naturally expect some object other than good will to be attained

at the same time. Morality has an object besides self-consistency and right feelings. These may be very good qualities, but they do not secure objective right and justice. They evidence nothing but the goodness of the person or agent, not the goodness of his acts externally considered, which is one of the important elements of morality. The world is constructed with a view to results as well as motives, and hence a formal good will, valuable as it is, does not supply the whole contents of that of which morality treats.

2. MERITS OF FORMALISM.—The fundamental difficulty of formalism grows out of the ambiguous import of the term "morality," which, as we have shown, is sometimes used objectively and sometimes subjectively. If we cast aside the objective import of the term; that is, its power to denote objective good, like order, perfection, others' peace and happiness, etc., we shall find a meaning which eludes the criticism that we have just made against the formal conception of morality. If morality means only the personal and volitional side of conduct, then Kant and the formalists are correct, and good will constitutes the whole of right action. The doctrine would then be consistent, whatever we thought of its completeness. But even when we concede that morality has to do with the objective as well as the subjective, formalism has certain merits which it is worth our while emphasizing.

The first of these merits is the *personal side of morality*. We found in the analysis of a moral act that no act could be strictly called moral which did not issue from conscious volition and intention. The mere accomplishment of a desired result is not sufficient, because, if it were, inanimate and physical movements might be called moral, and so might unconscious (reflex and automatic) actions of the person himself. The same objective good may be realized by such actions as by the intentional volitions of the subject. But no one for a moment would regard such actions as moral. All are agreed that to be moral an act must be initiated by intelligence and represent conscience in some form. This only shows how necessary motives, voli-

tion, and good will are to morality. It may be true, as it is, that morality is not complete until some end is attained, be it happiness, perfection, or other object, but it is no less incomplete when the good will is absent. So incomplete is it without intelligence and good will that it would not receive the name of morality at all unless they were present. Formalism, therefore, expresses the primary condition of morality. It embodies the whole contents of *virtue* as distinguished from *the good*, and so indicates why we praise an act of good will whatever the consequences, while we do not praise an act with good consequences which was not initiated by good will. It is the *personal* element of moral conduct that determines its characteristic worth. Formalism calls attention to that fact. It is perhaps unfortunate and one-sided in ignoring the importance of consequences, but it is right in maintaining the personal nature of all moral action and insisting that it is the subjective side of conduct which constitutes virtue and morality in the highest sense. Motives and volitions are purely internal events, though they are directed to the external. But as the causal connection between them and external events is not invariably the same, and as no man is morally responsible for consequences which he does not aim at and which he is not conscious of, there is nothing left but to judge the culpability and inculpability of conduct wholly from the subjective side, though we are justified in taking measures to prevent the mis-carriage of motives and to regulate the adjustment of inner and outer relations. It is personal agents or personal actions that we praise or blame, though we may welcome or deplore the occurrence of others according as the consequences are agreeable or disagreeable to us. Praise and blame, however, are accorded only to voluntary actions, so that the most important sphere of morality lies within the limits of motives and the good will. As long as this is the case we shall find the human mind emphasizing this side of conduct, especially because there can be no morality at all without it, while subjective morality or character can exist without regard to consequences or to the question whether the objective world is ideal or not.

The second merit of the theory is that it establishes a *personal law for conduct*. The attempt to make pleasure without qualification the law of volition will create in the actions of man all the caprice which we find in the occurrence of external events. Now an act would be permitted by the promise of pleasure, and now the same act would be prevented by the prospect of pain. It might be safe to steal to-day and dangerous to-morrow. But moralism insists that the law of a man's action shall be found in his own will. The individual should make duty his guiding principle whatever the attainable object at the time. Hence the notion of law, regularity, obligation, which the doctrine maintains represents a person of stable character, one whose tendencies can be relied upon and in whom confidence can be placed. We can calculate just what to expect, namely, conscientiousness in all his doings, the constant pursuit of an ideal which is independent of the vicissitudes of the world and represents the uniformity of nature in its persistency. We admire such a being because of the intrinsic worth of his will. His judgment may be bad in the material application of the moral law to individual cases, but the most important element is present, namely, conscience and good will. When a man aims rightly, when his intentions are good, it is an easier matter to inform his intellect as to the manner of his actions, than it is to create the good will when the judgment is clear and conscience seared. The education of the intellect is much easier than that of the will, and is quite different in its method. The greater power of the will to resist the right than of the intellect to evade the truth attests the greater difficulty of moralizing a man than of educating him. But when he has once decided to make the moral law an object of his will and lives up to it his moral *character* is settled whatever be the mishaps of a fallible judgment, and he has fulfilled the main requirement for which morality exists. Merit is personal, and in its highest development represents a law of the will rather than a law of things, and moralism must have the credit of maintaining the primary importance of this element and the purely secondary nature of consequences, though they are not to

be ignored. It is the morality of character with which ethics has to do rather than results. We want regularity, consistency, and nobility of purpose in the will as the chief object of morality, and when that is attained there will be less difficulty in accomplishing that for which utilitarianism stands. One of the difficulties of concentrating attention wholly upon the end or result of conduct is that we are apt to forget that it can often be attained as easily by the wrong as by the right means. We may not be far-sighted enough in applying the utilitarian standard, and hence if we can show the value of adopting a regular *form* of conduct, as in the long run most free from miscarriage, we emphasize the importance of also keeping the *means* in view as well as the *end*. This is precisely what moralism effects, and the fact establishes its right to a supplementary rank with utilitarianism, if not to a superior place in comparison.

VI. CONCLUSION.—The criticism of the various theories with their merits and demerits suggests the propriety of summing up their relations to each other and perhaps of combining them. This we think can be done so as to show how each position supplies an important element in the complex result known as morality. We concede that pleasure or happiness is a good, and it might be even the highest good taken in the abstract. But it is not a sufficient guide of itself in the world constructed as it is; and, moreover, it is not the only element of the ultimate end of conduct. It is rather a criterion of adjustment than a measure of the whole good to be ultimately attained. But it is nevertheless a datum which the healthy man cannot ignore. Utilitarianism is thus justified in the recognition which it gives to happiness. On the other hand, perfectionism is equally justified in maintaining that perfection is an ultimate good. It is one-sided when it wholly repudiates pleasure, though right when it asserts the primary character of development of function and excellence of being rather than merely phenomenal feeling. The two positions, however, should be united. As we have already indicated, neither perfection nor happiness, taken alone, is the highest good. Both of these combined represent the true

state of the case much better, and serve in practice to correct the aberrations naturally incident to dependence upon either of them. The fact is that *the moral ideal is synthetic or complex*, made up of elements which alone cannot satisfy the conception of morality. Combined in this way the two theories get all the advantages and have none of the defects which characterize them separately.

But there is still another important element in the problem. Theories of ethics usually assume that the whole question regarding the nature of conduct is determined solely by the end or consequence to be realized. This is particularly the position of utilitarianism, and is probably quite as true of perfectionism; namely, that the merit of conduct is supposed to be determined solely by the end, pleasure, or perfection. This, however, is a mistake, which is tacitly admitted when any concession is made to the value of motives. If morality were purely a question of objective results this would be true. The nature of an act would be determined wholly by the consequences and without regard to motive. But morality is not wholly a matter of consequences. It concerns personality and character. It expresses personal worth as well as a condition of things related to that worth. We praise or blame an act only when it originates from an intelligent source. It must be personal, free, and conscientious in order to be moral, and the act, so far as it is personal, is adjudged as moral and responsible only in relation to the end or consequence aimed at, not any consequence outside the intention of the subject. Further than this, even when the right end is sought the merit of the act is very much affected by the manner of seeking it. If the pursuit be instinctive or merely the natural and spontaneous prompting of the agent without any consciousness of the value of the end, or without any reverence for it as a moral ideal, however correct the act may be objectively, it has not the moral merit of an act which represents the rational and conscientious volition of the subject. *Thus, not only the end sought is involved, but also the manner of seeking it affects the nature of morality.* We have shown this in the analysis of the

conception of morality where it appeared that there were degrees of merit involved. First, there is the consequence affecting the act in its objective relations. Then there is the conscious and intentional pursuit of an end under the variety of motives known as instincts, desires, or natural promptings and without thought of the moral imperativeness of it. This is the second degree of moral worth. Then the third is action under the moral imperative or sense of absolute duty, which Kant made the sole element of morality. We regard it as only one, but the highest and most important of the three elements in it, treating morality as a *complex* and not as a simple product. But it is the first essential in it where rationality of the highest type is involved and represents a manner of action, the motives as the only determinant of character, whatever effect the end or result may have upon the matter objectively considered. To put the case briefly, therefore, utilitarianism and perfectionism assign correctly the objective or teleological determinant of morality, while moralism supplies the subjective element of it, the element of personal equation in the case, which, considering that morality has mostly to do with personality, must always be deemed the most important. Motives and character, the law of reason and personal reverence for such a law, are the starting-point of moral action and must receive a share of the merit distributed by the conception of morality, and hence the *manner* as well as the *matter*, the *form* as well as the *contents* of the moral law, enters into our estimate of it. In this way formalism is the complementary aspect of the other two theories, the obverse of which they are the reverse side of conduct. No one theory, therefore, is complete, but taken alone is one-sided, and requires the others to supply its deficiencies. This is in accord with common sense, which judges of particular cases about as described and only gets into difficulty when some theorist unjustly asks it to explain its consistency, presuming that there should be but a single simple criterion of morality, when in fact it is synthetic or complex.

A general agreement with the position here taken is embodied



in Professor Dewey's statement of the case. He also shows how hedonism and formalism supplement each other. "The fundamental error of hedonism and Kantianism," he says, "is the same—the supposition that desires are for pleasure only. Let it be recognized that desires are for objects conceived as satisfying or developing the self, and that pleasure is incidental to this fulfillment of the capacities of self, and we have the means of escaping the one-sidedness of Kantianism as well as of hedonism. We can see that the end is neither the procuring of particular pleasures through the various desires, nor action from the mere idea of abstract law in general, but that it is the *satisfaction of desires according to law*. The desire in its particular character does not give the law; this, as we saw in our criticism of hedonism, is to take away all law from conduct and to leave us at the mercy of our chance desires, as they come and go. On the other hand, the law is not something wholly apart from the desires. This, as we shall see, is equally to deprive us of a law capable of governing conduct. The law is the law of the desires themselves—the harmony and adjustment of desires necessary to make them instruments in fulfilling the special destiny or business of the agent." Apart from peculiarities of expression this language is that reason and desire, rational law, and the object of desire, hedonism and formalism, and we might add perfectionism, which is recognized in the above language, must be combined to represent rightly the conception of morality as a whole.

There is one final fact of much interest and importance in the case. It is that no other view will satisfactorily solve the so-called paradox of hedonism. We found Mill, Stephen, Spencer, and Sidgwick defending the strange doctrine that pleasure is the highest good and yet cannot be attained by directly seeking it. This position was taken in deference to the actual fact that the direct suit of pleasure, rather than action according to law or in pursuit of perfection, often defeats its own object. Instead of seeing in this fact evidence of weakness in the theory, they defend an ethical contradiction. But as no one denies the right to pleasure as a reward of virtue and a concomitant of perfection—

may, rather all affirm that this is the ideal order of things—we may see in the fact a way to recognize in perfection and formalism combined an end which can be directly sought while attaining happiness indirectly as a result. What these writers, therefore, asserted in regard to the proper way to attain happiness was correct, but it unconsciously sacrificed utilitarianism and confirmed the claims of opponents that the primary element and end of morality is something else and pleasure a desirable incident of virtue; that even if it is sought, it must not be the sole end of volition, and that it is more properly a concomitant and result of good will and the pursuit of perfection. Thus the paradox of hedonism when properly solved turns out to be a proof of other theories, while they still accord it a place in the ideal of ethics as a complementary element of it.

*References.*—On the classification of theories there are but few references to be given. Martineau: *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. I., Introduction; Sidgwick: *Methods of Ethics*, Book I., Chapter VI.; Murray: *Introduction to Ethics*, Book II., Chapters I. and II.; Wundt: *Ethik*, pp. 349–370.

On the discussion of theories and the nature of morality authorities are more numerous. Martineau: *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II., Book I. and Book II., Chapters I. and II.; Dewey: *Outlines of Ethics*; Mackenzie: *Manual of Ethics*, Chapters VI. and VII.; Bowne: *Principles of Ethics*, Chapters I., II., and III.; Spencer: *Principles of Ethics*, Vol. I., Part I.; *Social Statics* (Last Edition), pp. 7–62; J. S. Mill: *Essay on Utilitarianism*; Leslie Stephen: *Science of Ethics*, Chapters IV. and IX.; Calderwood: *Handbook of Moral Philosophy* (Fourteenth Edition), Part I., pp. 30–95; Grote: *Examination of the Utilitarian Philosophy* (the whole work has a most important bearing upon the problem of morality); Green: *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Book II., Chapter II., Book III., Chapter I.; Book IV., Chapters III. and IV.; Hume: *Treatise of Morals*, Part I., Sections I. and II.; Fowler and Wilson: *Principles of Morals*, Vol. II., Chapter VI.; Fowler: *Progressive Morality*; Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books I. and II., Book VII., Chapters VI.–XIV., and Book X.; Kant: *Metaphysic of Morals*; Abbott's Translation, Sections I. and II.; also *The Pure Practical Reason*, Book I.; Alexander: *Moral Order and Progress*, Chapter V.

## CHAPTER IX.

### MORALITY AND RELIGION.

*I. INTRODUCTION.*—One of the most perplexing questions of recent times has been the relation between morality and religion. As long as theological influences prevailed, as they did until the modern scientific tendencies against theology made themselves felt, there were no difficulties and little difference of opinion. But the intellectual and religious changes of the past century have greatly modified the needs of thought and practice, and consequently with skepticism in the ascendant against the traditions of theology, and practical life demanding other than the older sanctions for morality, there has been some confusion and much effort to reconstruct ethics to suit the intellectual condition of the age. On the one hand, we have the religious mind telling us that morality depends wholly upon religion, and that it cannot exist without the religion. On the other hand, we have those who have abandoned theological beliefs, and who yet feel the springs of duty as clearly and strongly as others, maintaining that morality is wholly independent of religion and may exist when religion has been dissolved. A third party reverses the order of dependence and makes religion depend upon morality, or at least the natural consequence of morality, and a fourth party identifies the two, not making either of them dependent upon the other, but regarding their true contents as the same. This view rejects anything more than morality in the case as unwarranted and illegitimate, while the third party holds that the relation between the two is such that the man *may* never go beyond morality, but that he cannot be religious until he does.

These four different conceptions make it very difficult to treat

the question without joining in the heat of the general controversy. Views so radically opposed to each other are not easily reconciled. Yet in spite of this fact I do not believe that the current confusion on the subject comes from the difficulty mentioned. It is due to very different facts. It originates from the failure at analysis of the problem to be solved. There are two perspicuous defects in all the discussions which have come under my notice. They are: (a) The constant failure to define carefully the nature and contents of both morality and religion before comparing them, and (b) the failure to distinguish between the *historical* and the *logical*, the actual and the necessary relation of morality to religion. In regard to the first of these derelictions it is remarkable that nearly all moralists leave religion wholly undefined in discussing its relation to morality. They assume that everybody is clear about its contents, an assumption that is wholly unwarranted. The fact is that there are few terms so indefinite and ambiguous in their meaning as the term religion. There is scarcely any unanimity of opinion in regard to its range of application. Sometimes it is not distinguished from theology, which is a theoretical and systematic construction of doctrines pertaining to the supernatural. Sometimes it is made as distinct from theology as actual morality is distinct from the theory of ethics. Then, again, even when clearly distinguished from theology, sometimes it is conceived as a system of *beliefs* and sometimes as a *cult*, which, although it implies beliefs of some kind, does not lay the stress upon them, but upon worship and ritual. There is in these several meanings material enough for an enormous amount of confusion, not to say anything of the double confusion caused by similar difficulties in the use of the term morality. In discussing the relation between this and religion there is often a confusion of Ethics as a science with morality as a habit of life, when in point of fact the two are as different as the science of physics and the practice of engineering. Then again even when these are distinguished there is the confusion of the subjective and the objective aspects of morality. All these ambiguities are sources enough of difficulty in dealing with the problem. But

they are not all. The second defect referred to above in most, if not all, discussions of the question very much complicates the confusion. It is the failure to distinguish between the actual and necessary or the historical and the logical connection between morality and religion, and the fallacious tendency to argue from the former to the latter. Nothing can be better established than the fact that religion and morality, however either or both of them may be conceived, have been intimately connected in the beliefs and practices of various ages. But this mere fact is no proof that they should be connected; nor does it prove that the conceptions in one field are dependent upon those in the other. This dependence may be a fact, but it requires more proof than the mere circumstance of their historical connection to show that one depends on the other. Moreover, also, some illusion is caused by the tendency to confuse the *dependence* of one of them upon the other with their mere *connection*. Coincidence of contents, however, does not prove that either of them conditions the other, while it will be found in the sequel that they do not exactly coincide in contents. Hence it is no wonder that there is so little clear thinking on this question, when the analysis required is not even attempted. In the following discussion some effort will be made to correct these errors.

**II. CONCEPTION OF RELIGION.**—In forming our conception of religion we have several facts to keep in mind. The first one is the various uses of the term; the second is the difference between defining what *is* or *has been*, and defining it as it *should be* apart from the incidents which confuse its import; and the third is the question of its origin and development with the contents of it in this process of evolution. Hence we must resolve the matter into the simplest question of which it is possible and keep all these various conceptions independent of each other. Its definition therefore will involve a careful analysis.

**1st. Theology and Religion.**—These two things are too often confused with each other, though they are perfectly distinct. Theology is a theory about the world and its causes as objects of religion, while religion is simply an attitude of mind toward

them involving emotional elements. Theology is purely scientific, philosophic, and intellectual, and excludes all emotional considerations from its object. But not so with religion, though it contains and implies beliefs of some kind. It is a concrete attitude of mind involving both intellectual and emotional elements, the latter probably predominating. Theology, however, is a form of philosophy, differing only from that subject in general in the conception of personality which it places at the basis of all phenomena, and it is perfectly compatible with the non-existence of religion altogether. A religion also may exist without any theology, though it contains the material out of which a theology may be developed. Theology is a reasoned system of doctrines, religion is a spontaneous belief and act of reverence for the divine, and hence the two things are as distinct as speculative philosophy and the common beliefs of mankind, though we often find men contending for theological theories as if they had all the value and efficiency of concrete religious beliefs and practices, when the fact is that a man may be ever so religious without having a theology at all (except *ἐν δυνάμει*) and may have a well-developed theology without being religious. The relation between theology and religion is the same as that between ethics and morality. Ethics is a science, morality is life or conduct. The former is the product of pure reason, the latter is tinged with emotion, the concrete expression of the whole of a man's moral nature. So with theology; it is the product of reason, with the same objects as religion, but eliminating the very element that makes religion what it is.

**2d. Definition of Religion.**—After eliminating the scientific and philosophic element as denoting reflection upon religion, we shall define religion to be both a *creed* and a *cult* in regard to *divine and supernatural things*, taking supernatural here to mean whatever is transcendental to direct human experience. It is, therefore, both a belief and a mode of worship; not necessarily a ritualistic or external form of worship, but at least a reverential attitude of mind involving respect and obedience to a supreme

power. It is not enough that there should be a mere belief in the divine existence, or in any other dogma, in order to be a religion. There may be any amount of intellectual assent to truth and the essential element of religion may be wanting. The belief must have an influence on life and thought, and it must be accompanied by a certain amount of positive reverence and respect for the nature and authority, or the power, of the being who is the object of belief. It, of course, assumes the truth and reality of the objects which it reveres, but it does not necessarily give any reason for this belief, nor attempt to rationalize it. It is mainly an emotion with a sufficient background of intellectual element to give it a definite and pertinent object. As Mr. Martineau puts it: "The essence of religion lies in communion between the finite and the infinite mind, between the individual soul and the universal."

The definition here is made as broad as possible, to cover every possible form of belief and reverence for the supernatural, from fetichism to modern theism. This is the only way to recognize the common elements in all those creeds and cults which go by the name of religion. We have to remember, however, that this merely defines religion as it is and has been, and does not define it with that differential element which is supposed to characterize the true religion. In fact we cannot undertake in a general discussion to define the true religion. It is not the place to do so. But the dissatisfaction which many will feel at the failure to describe religion more suitably to the modern complex conception of it is a reason for noting another ambiguity of the term. In speaking of the relation between religion and morality most persons have in mind, not the comprehensive and elaborated or formal definition of either one of them, but the concrete beliefs and practices of their own time. Religion to them will mean the concrete religions of their age. In many cases, general as the term is, it means only Christianity. In all such cases the question of the relation of religion and morality is decided by the facts. But when we undertake to determine that relation scientifically we must seek the fundamental conception of both and

solve the problem accordingly. The problem is a manifold one. First, what is the relation between actual religions and the actual codes of conduct? Second, what is the relation between actual religions and ideal or true morality? Third, what is the relation between true religion and ideal or true morality? The first of these questions is answered by the facts of observation and history. The second shows a tendency to define religion in the concrete and morality in the abstract, and is the favorite conception of the skeptic, who can easily find discrepancies between concrete or actual religion and abstract or ideal morality, discrepancies which make it advisable to separate them or to purify religion. The third question represents the true conception of the problem, and the only one which is capable of a proper and philosophic answer. We require carefully to define the essential elements of religion and morality both as they are and as they ought to be, and then to compare them on the same level, and not to compare the concrete conception of one with the abstract conception of the other.

Now, the logical definition of religion involves a statement of its essential and necessary elements, without which that term would not be applied to it, except by sufferance. Hence we have defined it as a belief and a cult, a belief in supernatural agencies and existence, and a cult or mode of worship, involving a certain measure of respect and obedience to these agencies as having power over us. The differential element in the conception here is the idea of the supernatural. The creed and cult must be regarding this or it will not constitute a religion. What connection this has with morality will be seen when morality has been defined in the proper way. Enough, however, has been determined to suggest certain differences which separate them, whatever points of conjunction may be found at another time.

But while this definition indicates what is essential, and *all* that is essential to a religion, it does not represent all the concrete elements that are often comprehended in the term and constitute the common understanding of its meaning. To make its com-



plex and concrete conception clear it will be necessary to examine briefly the evolution of religion and of the conception of it. This takes us over all forms of it, and indicates the elements not expressly noted in the definition.

**3d. Development and Contents of Religion.**—We shall here have to do with religion or religions in the concrete. The subject must be dealt with very briefly and with as little allusion as possible to the contents of the numerous religions of history. The chief practical interest in Western civilization is the relation between Christian conceptions and morality. But these conceptions are very complex and take up into themselves the total results of history.

It is probable that the first stage of the religious consciousness was a mere belief in the existence of supernatural forces, such as the universal existence of souls in nature. This would be the belief described by the term *animism*, and might also include the belief in ancestral souls and ghosts. But the latter does not require notice, though it represents a religious belief of an interesting kind connected often with peculiar ceremonies and sacrifices for appeasing the will of such agencies. The belief in animism, however, is the immediate precursor of *polytheism*, which represents a more anthropomorphic conception of supernatural existence and lays less stress upon the animistic nature of everything. It represents a stage of generalization reducing supernatural agencies of any importance for man to a smaller number than animism implies.

The second stage or element of the earliest form of religion was that of the *propitiation* of supernatural agencies. This was done in various ways, sometimes by sacrifices, vegetable, animal, or human, or by the performance of certain rites. The conception here was not only of the existence of supernatural beings, but also of their power to interfere with mundane affairs and to command the services of man. Here begins the notion of a providential system though characterized by the peculiar ideas of the time, which did little or nothing to idealize the beings who had so much power. Fear could be the only attitude of mind

towards agencies enjoying so much arbitrary power and without any moral character. They were to be propitiated only by some form of self-mutilation or sacrifice. The religion of this stage was only a religion of fear and terror. But the belief in supernatural existence and the propitiation of such agencies represent together the *creed and cult* elements of early religion, later developments simply adding new elements or modifying the old ones.

The polytheistic stage was largely mythological in its conceptions and so represented the deification of natural forces. The transition to the next higher stage, which we shall call *monotheism*, was characterized by a philosophic movement of the *cosmological* type. The unification of the forces of nature in a single all-pervading substance was the signal for reducing the gods to unity also. This was done by exalting one of them to the supreme place of authority and power and the reduction of all the others to his subjects or vassals. Monotheism was thus established, and it carried with it corresponding elements of intellectual culture. There arose a tendency to *idealize* God; that is, to attribute certain moral perfections to him. The notion of propitiation remained, and remains still in theology, but it was softened by the moral advances of the age. There were three elements in this stage. They were: (a) The personality of the divine; (b) the providential agency of the divine; and (c) the idealization of the divine. The notion of personality existed in the polytheistic stage, but the other elements were absent. Religion went no further than a belief and a cult in behalf of personal interests. But under monotheism the religious conceptions of the world at large reflected the new and higher social conditions and ideas, representing, on the one hand, moral character in the divine, and on the other, a providential government for other interests than those of the divine alone.

The next stage represents the highly organized religions of the present age, though their origin extends back into earlier times. The only one to be considered here is Christianity. This had its rise in a purely social and moral scheme, but soon

after its founder's death assumed a theological form and rapidly developed into a most elaborate system. It took up the cosmological elements of earlier philosophies and transformed them by the introduction of purely theological doctrines. The various elements constituting Christianity are as follows: (a) The personality of God; (b) providential government of the world; (c) the immortality of the soul; (d) the divinity of Christ, the founder of it; (e) a scheme of redemption involving propitiation by vicarious atonement and good works; (f) the inspiration of the Scriptures; (g) the cultivation of humanity and personal righteousness as a condition of realizing "the kingdom of God," which covers the moralization of the present life and salvation in the next, and (h) a form of worship.

The theological development of Christianity contains all these elements as essentials, and it is clear that social and ethical conceptions are very important parts of it, having adhered to it from the first, when it was solely an organized effort to moralize the individual will, partly by religious sanctions and partly by invoking the natural affections and sympathies. It contained only one element of religion at the outset, as we have defined it, and this was a belief in the divine, which was spontaneous, and not reflective or philosophic. A mode of worship soon became a part of it, both from the example of the founder and the religious needs of its devotees.

This complex mass of beliefs and enjoined practices shows us religion in the concrete as we see and know it about us. That it has a very intimate relation to morality, as a fact, ought to be unquestioned. A large element of its demands upon the individual are moral demands, and they have been sanctioned upon religious grounds. But whether there is any absolute necessity for a resort to these sanctions is another question. The social and religious history of the last eighteen centuries has largely identified Christianity with morality. But while this is a historical fact, it does not prove the dependence of that morality upon Christian sanctions, which is the common illusion of mankind, when asked to give a reason for this morality. It is noticeable

also that there are many theological elements in this concrete conception of religion which are not any part of it in the comprehensive sense of our definition. The further connection of it with morality, however, can be discussed only when we have recapitulated the conception of morals.

**III. CONCEPTION OF MORALITY.**—Morality is *good will and good conduct*, and hence is *action with reference to man as an end in himself*. This definition comprehends both the subjective and objective aspects of it. It limits the purpose (*τέλος*) of conduct to man and may or may not extend its range of importance beyond the present state of existence. But in determining the contents of morality we have a wide field of phenomena to cover. It comprehends every form of conduct from simple self-preservation to self-sacrifice. But we must classify its forms and develop their meaning.

**1st. Adjustment to Environment.**—This involves the virtue of protection against injury of all kinds, or the preservation of personal and physical integrity. It takes these forms, *physical*, *political*, and *social* adjustment, involving the three duties of *self-preservation*, *civil justice*, and *social equity*. This is purely an objective element of morality and represents the external forces which impose limitations on human liberty. Conformity to them is necessary as a condition of realizing any other desired end.

**2d. Realization of an Ideal Order.**—Besides mere adjustment to external forces, whether physical or personal, there is a field in which the human will can exert itself to modify those forces themselves. Hence its virtues or duties are not limited to *submission*, but extend to *aggressive* measures for establishing better physical and moral conditions in the world, as well as perfecting the agent's own powers. The duties here are those of education, including the culture of science and art and the expenditure of one's powers and resources in modifying the social and physical conditions of life. A better human order is the object of such duties and efforts. This is also an objective feature of morality.

**3d. The Exercise of Good Will.**—This is the subjective aspect of morality, and represents the demand made upon conscience whether a man is able to adjust himself to environment and to realize a better order of the world or not. Morality here means *volition from the sense of duty or its rightness*. The consequences may be what they please; the will must aim rightly. Man must look upon himself as an end, as having rational worth in the order of existence, and seek to preserve that worth. Or if we wish to put the matter upon a lower plane, we can express the ultimate end as welfare, happiness, or perfection. But as we are expressing it in terms of the will we prefer to formulate the subjective side of morality so that it shall represent life according to law, or the ideal will, seeking to transfigure all its volitions with the sense of duty, so that the *manner* of action may be right whatever mishap may occur to its *matter*. Conscientiousness is its content, and while it may extend to any object whatever, it does not require more than obedience to the moral imperative, which may not demand more than the perfection of the individual will.

Morality, then, being represented by good will and good conduct, which may be determined in many, if not in all, cases, without the aid of religion, the only question that remains is to ascertain their relation to each other, whether it is one of dependence, independence, or identity.

**IV. THE RELATION BETWEEN RELIGION AND MORALITY.**—The definition and analysis show us the contents of both religion and morality, and now the more difficult problem is to be solved. More than one aspect of it will have to be taken into account. But first as to contents.

The definition of religion shows that there must be a belief in the supernatural and some regard for it as a condition of the very existence of religion. This is not the case with morality so far as its objective aspect and contents are concerned. The belief in the supernatural is not necessary to it. Its object is man and his welfare, and not the propitiation or satisfaction of divine power. The fact also is that it may not seek a hereafter as its

primary justification or sanction, while religion usually includes as one of its objects a regard to immortality as a principle of conduct. When it does not it is a cult. There is nothing to prevent morality from thus taking into account the future after death as well as the whole scope of the present life. In fact, it may be admitted that the highest morality will do so, seeking adjustment to the eternal as well as the temporal. But conduct may be moral or immoral without either a belief in a hereafter or adjustment with reference to it, but with reference only to the present. There is even danger that an eye to a transcendental existence, of whose conditions we know nothing by experience, may obscure and divert us from many duties in the present. Hence while morality *may* have a meaning for eternity, *this is not its only import*. Morality has a value and an obligation when its purpose does not extend beyond the moralization of the present existence. Hence its contents do not necessarily include a supernatural reference.

This position can be reinforced by an admission of religionists themselves. The strictest religious orthodoxy always tells us that morality will not save a man, but that faith, grace, and atonement are essential to this end. In fact, the amount of emphasis laid upon the insufficiency of morality for redemption is astonishing when we consider that immorality alone is universally regarded as a sufficient reason for damnation. The confession, however, only proves that morality may exist, that meritorious conduct and character may exist without any accompaniment of the religious consciousness necessary to spiritual salvation, and that is sufficient proof that religion is not the only condition of an ethical life. The real motive for asserting the insufficiency of morality for eternal redemption came from the logical exigencies of the controversy between Greek and Christian thought, and from the hard and fast line drawn by theology between the redeemed and the lost. On the one hand, Greek philosophy asserted the adequacy of natural morality, and the Christian inferred from the supposed truth of this claim that there would be no need for the distinctly Chris-

tian scheme on that supposition. Faith, atonement, and grace were supposed to be purely supererogatory, if the same end could be attained by moral volition. On the other hand, the failure of theology to recognize degrees of redemption and damnation, or of conditions expressed by them, cut itself off from admitting any redemptive agency in morality, though it was inconsistent in asserting the damning agency of immorality. If faith, grace, and atonement are necessary to salvation, or are the primary condition of it, then the rejection of these, or infidelity, should be the only proper condition of damnation. However this may be, the one motive for asserting the insufficiency of morality was the fear that men might be saved without the need of admitting Christianity; but in asserting that religion is a condition of morality, theology forgot the independence of the latter implied in its insufficiency for redemption.

In their *essential contents*, therefore, religion and morality are wholly independent of each other. Religion, as we have seen, is a creed and a cult, a belief and form of worship, directed to the supernatural; morality is good will and conduct directed to the welfare of man; in some cases is nothing more than right social relations. Thus God is the object of one and man the object of the other. This single fact stamps them as distinct provinces. But nevertheless it does not solve the whole of the problem before us. The relation between them is not altogether one which can be decided by a comparison of their contents and objects. The traditional claim of the theologian has been that religion is essential to morality; that morality has its foundation in religion and religious postulates. It has always been understood to mean either that unless the doctrines of theism are true, morality is not obligatory, or that unless a man is religious, he will not be moral. Hence we are required to study the problem from the standpoint of its *ground*, as well as its contents and objects.

The theological position seems to be a very simple one, and is taken to be such by nearly all disputants. But this is not the case. It involves two totally distinct questions as it is usually

discussed. They are the question of the *ground* and the question of the *sanctions* of morality. These two aspects of the problem are wholly independent of each other. The ground of morality must be either the nature of the Absolute, or the end to which volition is directed, or it may be both. Under the first conception of the case we must undoubtedly find an ultimate basis for morality in the postulates or conclusions of metaphysics, and it does not matter whether we regard the Absolute as personal or not, so that the theological or religious view has no more claims than any other point of view. But if it be the end of volition that determines the ground of morality, metaphysics and theology may both be shut out from being the only court of judicature in the case, unless they are called upon to decide the end of conduct. Moreover, the end is the only datum which can determine the contents of morality, and if theology cannot assign the end of conduct, or if this end can be decided independently of theology, morality will not depend wholly upon the postulates of metaphysics. But the chief illusion of those who assert an exclusively religious basis for morality is that they confuse the condition of its validity with the condition of our knowledge of its validity. They discuss the whole question as if we had to believe the theory of virtue before we could be virtuous; as if we had to believe the ground of it before we could believe it binding or practice it. There is no more absurd illusion. It may be true that all morality has its ground in some ultimate truths, metaphysical or theological, or the condition of things represented by those truths. But it does not follow either that we would not know or that we could not practice morality until we admit those truths. The fact is that we know and practice morality before we think of seeking its grounds anywhere. Hence, while the *nature* of morality, as a phenomenon in the world, may well have a basis in the Absolute which is an object of metaphysical study, the *knowledge* of it has no such basis, and all that is required for morality to exist is that a man have a knowledge of its end and to pursue that end conscientiously, whether he possesses a belief and a cult regarding the super-



natural or not. Morality comes from the springs of character, from good will and insight as to the moral end, and not from a knowledge of metaphysical or theological postulates; nor any more from religious beliefs and practices. This should be evident to that whole school of moralists who have defended the natural and implanted character of conscience as a part of man's endowment, while maintaining the revealed nature of religion and Christianity.

In regard to the second question, we must remark the fact that the *sanctions* of morality bear no necessary relation to its grounds. They are not the basis of right, but *are only reasons for doing it*. These reasons for doing right do not necessarily constitute its nature in all cases, but may represent motives independent of the nature of morality itself. The theologian too often confuses this problem with that of the grounds of right. Now, we frankly admit that religion may be a sanction of morality: it may be the highest sanction. *But it is not the only sanction*. The religious mind makes the mistake of supposing that religion is the only sanction, and the anti-religious mind the mistake of supposing that it cannot be a genuine sanction at all.

The problem in Ethics is a twofold one. It seeks, first, to determine the nature, contents, and ground of morality (*ratio essendi*). Ultimately this can be only one principle. Then as a second object it endeavors to find reasons for doing what is right, arguments that may make it effective (*ratio movendi*). The latter does not necessarily coincide with the former. The ultimate ground of morality, or its intrinsic worth, is always a reason for realizing it, but it may not present an effective motive to the will. The ideal may have no efficiency. Hence we may resort to any other incidents in its nature or connections to induce conformity to it. Thus we may assert that morality is a part of the will of God, a part of His revelation, in order to obtain all the motive force attaching to the acceptance of those facts for securing conduct whose inherent character is not a sufficient motive to effect the will. In that case we are only appealing to a recognized authority for obtaining at least self-consistency on the

part of the agent. If he admits the existence and ideal nature of God, and appreciates the religious consciousness at all, he must naturally feel that God's character and commands, though they do not make morality, may be a reason for obedience and for doing the right. To such a person religion must be the highest sanction for morality. And when we come to recognize that the conception of God is the highest ideal man can know, and that He represents the highest sovereign of the universe, His character and authority, taken with His assumed omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence, must form the most important and effective of all sanctions.

But the religious mind wholly forgets that the effectiveness of this sanction depends upon the agent's admitting the existence of God and the truth of religion. Unless they are admitted it is useless to contend for them as reasons for doing what is right. When a man does not admit the truth of religion and religious doctrines, or does not feel their value, any attempt to make morality and its obligations depend wholly upon them, must issue in shifting the controversy away from the nature and validity of morality to the truth of religion, and in the meantime Ethics must pay the forfeit. Now, there are many minds that are skeptical in matters of religion, that either deny the supernatural and affiliated beliefs or are too uncertain about them to base their conduct upon so insecure a foundation, and yet feel the springs of conscience and duty quite as forcibly as the religious mind. They feel the value and imperativeness of moral law as fully as anybody else, and yet know that if its validity depends upon the acceptance of religion, they must be exempt from its obligations, because to them religion is wholly an uncertain quantity. They are entirely within their rights, therefore, when they seek extra-religious sanctions for morality. What they stand for is the idea that religious consciousness, in so far as it represents a belief in the supernatural, and a form of worship, is not a precondition of knowing what is moral and feeling its imperative worth. They can be as earnest and self-sacrificing as religious persons, and desire in some way, not only to identify their lives with the world's

regeneration, but also to give effective reasons for morality without engulfing themselves in the swamps of theological controversy. They would avoid this and seek independent reasons for virtue, so that it may be saved, whatever the issue in religious questions. Now, there may be any number of sanctions for morality outside of religion, and this without denying that religion, if true, furnishes the most valuable of all sanctions. They are utility or happiness, self-consistency, perfection, the value of the ideal, social order, public opinion, law, and any influence which exists in favor of morality, and which may be employed to move the mind. The ground of morality, the ultimate object of volition is the true and most universal of the sanctions for it. But it is not always effective, especially when personal interest conflicts or seems to conflict with it. Hence much importance of a practical kind attaches to securing a fact which will show an agreement between duty and interest in the particular case. This will be a reason for doing it when the ideal itself is ineffective. The attainment of a practical reason for being moral is the great object of practical Ethics, and of those who feel that the religious sanction loses its efficiency with the extension of skepticism. We conclude, therefore, that religion is not the only sanction of morality, and is not even the most universal or effective sanction, for the reason that its nature and validity is still an open question with many of our most earnest minds, whose co-operation is too much needed in morality to shut them out from sympathy, by turning the whole problem into a theological dispute about the existence of God and the importance of ritual worship. These have their place and value; but their difficulties are greater than those of the moral law, and hence the validity and security of the latter should not be weakened by the uncertainties of the former.

Mr. Martineau \* states the whole case very clearly to prove what has just been maintained. "If we start from our own psychological experience alone," he says, "without assumption or speculation respecting the universe around, we meet there, at

\* Study of Religion, Vol. I, Introduction.

a very early stage, with ethical elements, involving the idea and furnishing the rule of duty. Childhood itself, small as are its concerns, is full of its moral enthusiasms and indignations, quick with its shame and compunction, bright with its self-approval; and with all its heedlessness betrays every day the inner working and the eager growth of Conscience. This order of feeling, personal and sympathetic, does not wait for the lessons of the religious instructor and the conception of the universe as under Divine administration; on the contrary, it is the condition on which such teaching depends for its efficacy, and is present where no theological sequel is ever appended to it. The profound sense of the authority and even sacredness of the moral law is often conspicuous among men whose thoughts apparently never turn to superhuman things, but who are penetrated by a secret worship of honor, truth, and right. Were this noble state of mind brought out of its impulsive state and made to unfold its implicit contents, it would indeed reveal a source higher than human nature for the august authority of righteousness. But it is undeniable that the authority may be felt where it is not seen, felt *as if it were* the mandate of a Perfect Will, while yet there is no overt recognition of such will; *i.e.*, conscience may act as human before it is discovered to be divine. To the agent himself its whole history may seem to lie in his own personality and his visible social relations; and it shall nevertheless serve as his oracle, though it may be hid from him *who* it is that utters it. The moral consciousness, while thus pausing short of its complete development, fulfills the conditions of responsible life and makes character real and the virtues possible. Ethics, therefore, have practical existence and operation prior to any explicit religious belief; the law of right is inwoven with the very tissue of our nature and throbs in the movements of our experience, and cannot be escaped by any one till he can fly from himself. Did we even imagine that we came out of nothing, and went back into nothing, and had ties only with one another; still, so long as we are what we are, our life must take form from its own germ, and grow and ramify into moral commonwealths."

After showing that religion is in no sense the ground of morality, and that it is not the only, though it may be the highest, sanction of it, it may be well to call attention to certain incidents in which they are closely related. Both religion and morality have an emotional element. This emotional element is the same in its nature. It is reverence for an ideal. The difference is in the nature of the object to which the reverence is directed. In the case of religion it is the person, the perfections, and the providence of a Supreme Being; in the case of morality it is either the moral law as an ideal condition of will, or it is an ideal order which the will owes it to itself to realize, or it is the ideal man. God may be an object of moral as well as religious reverence. Not so with man; he can be an object only of moral, but not of religious, reverence. This is a most radical difference between them. The reverence in each case affects action. But religious reverence will not affect moral action unless the individual consciousness has connected its morality with its religion as an element in the total of its mental objects, as is generally the case in the most important religions. It avails only to secure adjustment to the authority and power of deity, and unless God is idealized or made to reflect the moral character which a developed consciousness naturally reveals from its very constitution, reverence for him never affects the moral life. But it is a peculiarity of all the ethnic religions that they have in some way permeated the whole moral life of their devotees in some way. This may have been from their power to invoke the fear of men or to invite their love and affections. Whatever the motive they excite, they have affected the customs and conduct of whole nations. This is simply a historical fact not to be disputed and shows a very important influence upon morality, as that defines the actual habits of men. But while the sentiment of reverence, on the one hand, and the conception of moral personality in the Divine Being, on the other, unite to affiliate moral and religious feelings, the material objects of the two remain entirely distinct; that is, the ends which they are designed to serve. At the same time the coincidence of the two prov-

inces is effected by the tendency of religion to appropriate every ideal element of consciousness, which it has a right to do, but in doing so often mistakes the appropriation for the right to determine or condition the existence of morality.

We remarked above that "in their *essential* contents" religion and morality are independent of each other, while the admissions just made would seem to make them interpenetrate and to contain much of the same object matter. Both views, however, are correct. It is only in their *essential* and *distinctive* contents—that is, as strictly defined—that they are independent of each other. We have indicated the true mark by which religion is to be recognized, and that is the belief and worship of the supernatural, which is not any part of morality, though this may be sanctioned by it. But it is the characteristic of common and unscientific thought, not to use the term "religion" in its strict meaning. To this, religion means, besides what we have defined it, almost anything else covered by great moral earnestness, or sanctioned by religious authority. From the very fact that religion may sanction morality, it has a tendency to bring every object of reverence and admiration under the shelter of its wings. The emotions of the two fields being of the same nature augments this tendency, and hence the objects which define the field of morality, such as personal worth, the sense of duty, public welfare, and all the social and moral ideals, such as veracity, justice, honesty, chastity, benevolence, etc., are naturally enough absorbed by the religious frame of mind. *But they are no part of its elements as a religion, defined as above.* If they are to be regarded so, it must be on the ground that we have not correctly defined religion, and that it is more than a creed and a cult regarding the supernatural. If it be more than this we do not see how it can be defined at all without identifying it and morality, which would prevent it from being either the ground or the sanction of morals, and contradict all human experience in the fact that men can be moral without being religious. This could not be if they were identical in their contents. Morality may be transfigured and rendered nobler, more constant, and self-sacrific-

ing by the influence of religion. This, however, is not because they are of the same nature, but only because the sentiment of reverence and the moral character attributed to the divine power ruling the world are so closely identified with the emotional element of morality and the qualities of man which are entitled to moral reverence, that they interpenetrate with morality and absorb as incidental contents matters which are not essential and distinctive features of religion scientifically defined. This is simply to say that the emotional elements of religion and morality are so nearly or so distinctly the same, that it is only natural for them to interpenetrate in some of their connections, and more especially since both have *personality* as an object and involve a *cosmological* reference in the determination of conduct. The divine is regarded as the sovereign of nature, and man must adjust himself to this system, and hence, whether he admits a personal ruler of the world or not, his conduct must be the same in kind and character. The nature and worth of his volitions must remain the same under all circumstances, and religion can only increase the sanctions for them. It does not condition them nor determine their worth. It adds efficiency, not value, to them. Consequently, notwithstanding the personal and cosmological relations of the two sets of phenomena, in the intersection of their interests, the only way to maintain a necessary connection between them is to stretch the meaning of religion so that it can denote whatever has happened historically to get the sanction of religious minds. What we have to learn, however, is the great difference between religion and religious minds. The former is a definite and definable thing; the latter, beyond the distinctive element which makes it religious, is not definable at all, but may include anything whatever among the objects of its reverence. In a scientific treatment of the question we must rely upon strict definition, and this will show not only the distinctness of the two classes of phenomena in all but their psychological and subjective elements, but also the probability that religion could secure its survival only by the afterthought of connecting itself with morality, a view which is amply sustained by the history of Greek

intellectual development, and by the superior power of all religions which have been fortunate enough to ingraft morality upon them. But in the process of absorbing morality religion has run away from its original object, and although it has purified itself in doing so, it can give an efficacy to moral law which that seems not to possess without the inspiration of religious consciousness. The relation of the two, therefore, in their scientific conception, seems to be that of a product conjoining religious power with moral objects; which is simply to say that the distinctively religious element is not the condition of morality, but only adds enthusiasm and efficacy to qualities which can exist independently of it.

The last topic confirms this general conclusion while admitting a close connection between them. But it shows that if any relation of dependence exists at all it is the reverse of what the theologian claims. Religious advocates usually tell us that there can be no morality without religion. On the contrary, several facts show that, if there be any dependence at all, morality must condition religion, at least in all those characteristics which affect social and moral life.

In the first place, we have seen that the most orthodox defenders of the supremacy of religion tell us that morality will not save a man from perdition, which, as observed, admits its possible existence without religion. But the same persons tell us that we cannot be saved without morality, which is to partly condition redemption upon a moral life, and so to supplement its deficiencies by adding to it the sanctifying influences of religion, which is the most important of the two redemptive agencies, as maintained by its defenders. But even morality is not necessary for salvation, as judged from the standpoint of death-bed repentances. This latter theory is inconsistent with the one just stated, though it has seemed necessary in order to retain any argument for the value of religion. However, not to persist in emphasizing this weakness, which is rather logical than moral, because the healthy moral mind revolts against so extreme a conception of the problem, we would remark that in so far as



religion is supposed to supplement the inadequacy of morality for redemption it cannot condition it, but would more probably be itself conditioned by morality.

Confirming this conclusion is a second fact of great significance. It is that the moralization of human consciousness has preceded the conception of moral personality and character in the divine, which has been supposed to authorize or even create morality. If anything is clear in the history of religion generally, it is that the first conception of God was that of mere power, superior or omnipotent power, to be feared and propitiated, not loved. Greek mythology and polytheism reflect nothing else, and even its monotheism is often darkened by the shadows from the earlier and mythological view. Indeed the immense power of skepticism in the hands of the Sophists was due to the utterly immoral character of the gods as conceived by the uncritical and traditional beliefs of Greece. They were the embodiment of arbitrary power, and religion was only a nightmare of fear and propitiation directed to satisfy the caprices and cruelties of these beings, whose character after all was but the reflection of political life, on the one hand, and of the conception of physical nature, on the other. But wherever moral consciousness rose above the notion that might could make right, and wherever it conceived social relations as involving respect for humanity, it began at once to idealize the divine agencies which had been placed at the helm of the universe, and religion was purified by the previous realization of moral conceptions. While religion as a mere unintelligent belief in divine agency and a cult of propitiation might and did exist prior to moral consciousness of any kind that affected this religion, the refined and nobler conceptions sheltered by modern Christianity were determined and conditioned by the higher conception of morality which transfigured it. The idealization of the divine was a consequence of moral consciousness, not a condition of it. As man's moral consciousness developed and felt more and more the impulse of the ideal and the enthusiasm of humanity, it began to reflect its attainment in the conception of God. The old

Greek dramatists and moralists, the Hebrew prophets, and the founder of Christianity transfigured the divine by changing the conception of it from that of a mere sovereign whose wrath was to be appeased by sacrifices to that of a merciful and righteous power benevolently interested in the welfare of man. In brief, the character of the divine, which is an object of worship to religion, is a reflection of the moral development of the age. Religion does not get beyond the fear of power when morality is nothing but the reluctant adjustment to forces that compel obedience, but do not invite respect. It becomes an embodiment of love and reverence when morality has been sufficiently developed to dispel the belief and respect for the divine unless it can reflect the ideal. Hence we find in this fact a proof that moral consciousness conditions the religious, as it appears in the concrete religion of the day. It may not condition religion as abstractly defined, but it does condition the concrete system of beliefs and practices which go by that name in current usage, and that is what is usually meant by the term. Hence theology seems to be in a dilemma. If religion be strictly defined it either wholly separates morality from itself or it identifies the two. In neither case can it be a condition of morality. On the other hand, if religion be defined in concrete terms representing the moralized conception of the divine as reflected in prevailing religious views, morality or moral consciousness is a condition of religion, and not the reverse, and this simply because the history of religion does not show the incorporation of morality among its sanctities until it became a part of the revelation of consciousness independent of that religion.

In the general conclusion, therefore, taken in their scientific definition, religion and morality are independent of each other, both in conception and contents. But taken in the popular sense where religion is conceived to mean anything which comes under its sanction, the two fields of phenomena intersect and interpenetrate; but religion is not a condition of morality, while the latter conditions the idealization of the divine as a product of metaphysical inquiry into the explanation of nature. Nor

does this view reflect on the value of the religious consciousness. There is no necessity in the world's economy that religion should condition morality. On the contrary, the necessity seems the other way. Religion is properly the crown and flower of morality, and the very fact that it is this, that it represents the highest development of human consciousness, as comprehending earnestness and reverence toward the totality of a man's relations to the world and its Maker, the last and mature product of human reason, establishes its dependence for purity and rationality upon the right ordering and development of all the lower functions which it takes up and appropriates. It is only mistaking the sanction of morality for the condition of it that reverses the true order of conception. But it is a false honor to claim for religion a consideration which puts morality at the mercy of skepticism in theology, and casts every man outside the fold of righteousness who cannot agree with us in religious matters. The moral interests of the world require harmony instead of dissension, and this can be obtained by uniting on the certainties of moral consciousness instead of resorting to the old methods of authority and appealing to conceptions whose validity is still in court.

We may summarize the complex relations which we have considered between religion and morality, and in this way obtain a more comprehensive view of them. (a) The object of religion is the supernatural, that of morality is human welfare and conformity to the sense of duty. (b) Religion is not the ground, but the sanction, of morality, and is, moreover, not the only sanction of it. (c) The psychological or subjective elements of religion and morality are the same or closely related, but the objective elements are different. (d) The two fields of phenomena intersect and interpenetrate, but only in the popular and concrete use of the term religion. (e) The ideal character of the divine is a reflection of a previously developed moral consciousness, and not the reverse. All these show that the problem of the relation between religion and morality is a very complicated one, and requires a method for its solution quite different from

the usual procedure. We only trust that in attempting it we have met with at least a measure of success, and at the same time have committed no offense against the sanctities of the question.

*References.*—Martineau: *Study of Religion*, Vol. I., Introduction; *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II., Book I., Chapter VI., § 9; *Essays, Reviews and Addresses*, Vol. IV., pp. 293–317; Mackenzie: *Manual of Ethics*, Chapter XVII., pp. 302–320; Stuckenberg: *Introduction to the Study of Philosophy*, Chapter IX., especially p. 342; Fiske: *Cosmic Philosophy*, Vol. II., pp. 357, 465; Smyth: *Christian Ethics*, Introduction, more especially pp. 13–26; Fowler and Wilson: *Principles of Morals*, Vol. II., Chapter X.; Martensen: *Christian Ethics (General)*, Introduction, especially pp. 13–22; Wundt: *Ethik*, Erster Abschnitt, Zweites Capitel, pp. 33–84; Janet: *Theory of Morals*, Chapter XII.; Dörner: *Christian Ethics*, pp. 134–141, and Introduction; Pollock: *Essays in Jurisprudence and Ethics*, Chapter XI.; Schurman: *Belief in God*, Lecture III.; Barratt: *Physical Ethics*, pp. 380–387; Caird: *The Critical Philosophy of Kant*, Vol. II., Book IV., Conclusion; Knight: *Christian Ethic*; Gizycki: *Moral Philosophie*, pp. 329–495; Translation by Coit, pp. 208–276; Bowne: *Principles of Ethics*, Chapter VII.

## CHAPTER X.

### THEORY OF RIGHTS AND DUTIES.

*I. INTRODUCTORY.*—The doctrine of rights and duties has some complications which require careful consideration. In some connections the two conceptions seem to be dependent on each other, and in other instances they seem to be wholly unrelated. On the one hand, wherever a duty exists, a right seems to be involved. This, of course, means that an individual duty involves the right of the person to freedom of conscience and action in that particular. On the other hand, a right is often claimed for actions which do not involve duties of any kind, except in other persons than those who have the right in the case. Then again my rights determine others' duties toward me, but they may have duties toward me which do not affect any rights in me or add to them. This is a complication which it is well worth while to carefully analyze and explain.

Man is said to be the subject of both rights and duties, and the problem of theoretical Ethics is to ascertain whether one determines the other and which does so, or whether both of them may not have a common ground upon which to rest. Some writers, as Trendelenburg, condition all rights upon moral principles or duties; others condition duties upon rights, and so seem to condition morality upon data which are purely optional with the human will. This is because the term "rights" often expresses privileges whose enjoyment does not seem to involve morality, but only ethically indifferent conduct. Thus a man may be said to have the right to take a bath, to laugh at a joke, to talk to his neighbors, to look out of his window, to live on a vegetable diet, etc., but not to be unconditionally obliged to per-

form any of these acts. By supposition in these cases there is no duty to act, but only the liberty to act or not, as we please. The right, however, carries with it the duty of others to respect it, although the right does not originate presumably in any duty of the subject. If duty were thus limited to the correlation with rights it would have nothing more than a social meaning and content, and so not apply outside of social relations. But the main problem suggested by the fact is the question whether duties are always relative and whether rights are founded upon morality in its last analysis, or whether they depend upon what is implied in the idea of personality. We are in the habit of regarding duty as absolute, at least in its application to the highest good. But if it be only relative to the existence of rights, and these represent only optional conditions, duty seems to have no other foundation than an alterable set of circumstances, and may be evaded by abandoning the claim to rights, unless we can find a basis for these which is not optional. On the other hand, there is the question whether "rights" express merely an immunity against the interference of others, which would give both rights and duties nothing but a social content, so that the individual apart from his social conditions would be exempt from the obligations to morality. On account of the complexities involved in these questions it is important to examine the nature and kinds of both rights and duties, with the implications they contain and the full contents of their meaning.

*II. NATURE OF RIGHTS.*—The most important general observation to be made about "rights" is the fact that we are not here dealing with a property of *actions*, but of *persons*. We have already seen that "right" can be taken to describe the moral quality of conduct and denotes either its correctness as a means to an end, or its intrinsic worth and claim to approbation, wrong denoting the opposite. But as here considered, in the plural, or spoken of as "a right," the term denotes nothing of the kind. We have to speak and think of rights as belonging to persons and as describing certain immunities possessed by them.

**1st. Definition.**—The shortest definition of a right would be that it is a *claim to the forbearance and protection of others in certain specific cases*. Another account would make it express a *privilege which exempts the subject from blame or censure in the exercise of it*. The latter view is probably more comprehensive than the former, which implies at least the social conditions determining the "right." But in order to be more clear and definite we shall call the former *social* and the latter *individual* or *moral* rights. The difference between them is that the violation of social duties is *punishable*, of individual or moral duties, *censurable*. The social right is a claim against violence; a moral right is a claim against reproach. Both, of course, represent what is censurable, but the evasion of the latter duties is *only* censurable, while that of social rights is more. In both senses, however, rights only express that which the agent is at liberty to pursue, and which others must respect. But in all cases it indicates a defensible claim against aggression, interference, or restraint. This claim is wholly for liberty of action, or of controlling possessions. Where a right is denied, we prohibit, either legally or morally, the actions which would be protected by it. Hence the idea practically resolves itself into a legitimate demand for freedom or liberty of action, which implies the duty of others to respect it. Its full meaning, however, can be determined only by an examination of its *limitations* and its *correlates*.

**2d. Limitations of Rights.**—Rights cannot be predicated of man without certain limitations. If they could, they would mean unrestricted liberty, sanctified by all the sacredness which attaches to both conceptions. But as a matter of fact the welfare of both the individual and of society requires very decided restrictions upon individual liberty, and so upon individual rights. This doctrine requires assertion because of the ambiguity latent in the term "rights," which is often taken to imply the *legitimacy* of an act, as well as the *liberty* to perform it, nothing being implied as to its character in the latter case. This sacredness attaching to it is too often assumed to imply that rights are un-

limited and unconditional. But this can easily be shown to be wholly false. The conception has most decided limitations.

1. MAN HAS NO RIGHTS IN RELATION TO NATURE.—Nature here represents the physical and external world, or all impersonal forces whatsoever. Against them man has no rights, but only *powers*. Between man and nature it is simply and only a struggle for supremacy; it is a contest between two powers or forces, in which the stronger must prevail; and if man be the weaker and is crowded to the wall he cannot assert any charges of injustice, nor if the stronger and successful, can he claim that his victory is a triumph of justice. If man has any rights at all, therefore, they must be determined by some other fact than a relation to impersonal forces. This is clear by making the attempt to imagine a man as having rights in a state of solitude. Placed face to face with nature alone he can have no rights for the simple reason that rights imply a duty on the part of others to respect them, and nature cannot be charged with any duties. Only personal agents can have duties; impersonal forces can only have powers. Rights are purely relative, and *hence are limited to the sphere of social and moral conditions*. They are not an attribute of man conceived as an individual being, but only of his social relations. If, then, he can be said to have duties independently of his social relations, in its last analysis duty and morality are not determined by rights. But not to anticipate, the fact that he has no rights in relation to nature shows that the claim to them is limited and that they are not a possession of him as an individual, but only as a member of a social organism, as one among equals.

We do, nevertheless, often speak of a man as having a right to perform a certain act when he seems to be related only to nature. Thus a man has a "right" to look at the stars, to eat food, to hunt game, to take exercise, etc., even in a solitary state when a social organism does not exist, or when others cannot make any claims upon his forbearance or assistance. This conception has been alluded to before and it is undoubtedly the most comprehensive use of the term. It denotes, not so much a



claim against the will of others as exemption from censure or reproach for one's course of action, or exemption from the incumbency of obligation. This same notion holds of the term as expressing a claim against legitimate interference from others. But in spite of this common characteristic such a right is not determined by the man's relation to nature, but solely by the exemption from duty which possesses a resemblance to exemption from the legitimate interference of others. In the broadest sense of the term, "rights" express liberty. But it is, on the one hand, liberty from social restraint, and on the other liberty or exemption from moral censure. The difference, however, is not in favor of man's having rights in relation to nature. It is only transferring a conception of social limitations over to the relation between a man and his own conscience, so that where duty is not binding the man can possess the same liberty of action as he possesses when others can make no claims upon his sacrifices. Hence it is not the relation to nature that determines these rights, so that the dictum announcing the limitations of rights to social and moral conditions still holds true.

2. RIGHTS ARE LIMITED BY RECIPROCITY.—This is a most important restriction upon the claim to rights. It is embodied in the modern practice and institutions of social life, and is expressed as an axiom that no man can claim that which he would not grant to another under the same conditions. A man cannot claim the right or privilege to do injury to others without granting to them the same immunity. If this claim ever be advanced in favor of one and not of another, it must reduce social organization to chaos. It would be tantamount to a declaration of social inequality, and place all but the incumbent under restraints which would not be endured. Moreover, one man cannot claim, in the nature of things, more than he will concede to others under like circumstances, without endangering his own claim. Again, the reason for claiming a right will be the same in all normally and rationally constituted persons, and hence if legitimate in one instance will be legitimate in all such. Consequently the admission of rights in one involves that

of equal rights with the others. Moreover, where one man has a right, the fact excludes the right of others to infringe it, so that the formula for the limitation of rights will be that *a claim to rights must consist with the equal rights of all others, conditions being the same*. This principle imposes very distinct limitations upon free action, by requiring the suppression of all claims that conflict with social welfare and the conformity of the individual will to this end. The strict application of this principle in social life assumes that all men are equal, and hence the doctrine that all men have equal rights. In practice, however, the principle requires qualification to suit the various conditions and characters of men. But wherever men are equal in endowments and disposition, they have equal rights, so that the only limitation which they can possess under these conditions is that of the same rights in others. The individual is subordinated to the whole, or each person is required to adjust his claims to freedom of conduct to those conditions in which he must surrender all superiority and advantage over others, his equals. If men are unequal the case is different.

3. RIGHTS ARE LIMITED BY THE DEGREE OF RESPONSIBILITY.—If all men were equal in their endowments, physical, intellectual, and moral, their responsibility would be the same and the abstract principle announced in the preceding section would be applied without qualification. But men are not constituted equal. They vary in their several characteristics, and more particularly in the intellectual and moral. The latter especially affect their responsibility, as we have already seen in a previous chapter. Their rights must be modified in the same proportion. Perfect freedom of action can be accorded to the intellectually and morally sane, but must be restricted in the defective classes. This principle is applied to the criminal, the pauper, the imbecile, and the insane, and with a less degree to children. The fact is, of course, a mere truism. But it is referred to in order to show that rights are not absolute possessions, but are subordinated to some other fact in man's moral nature. This limitation requires that they be deduced or deter-

mined from the principle upon which they depend, or by which they are conditioned.

**3d. Correlatives of Rights.**—It has been established that rights are purely relative to the claims of others upon us, or to the sphere of indifferent actions affecting the welfare of ourselves and others. This implies that they have an object which may be called their correlative. A correlative is that which is implied or implicitly expressed in a given datum. Rights involve this and derive their whole meaning from it. They may be summarized as follows, as they define the sphere of conduct.

**1. SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND DUTIES.**—We have seen that a man does not strictly possess rights in a state of isolation or solitude, but only when he is placed in a moral relation to his fellows having duties to him. *Hence duty is the correlative of rights.* This conception is expressible by the formula that the rights of A involve the correlative duty of B to respect them. A social order is the recognition of this fact. But it is not necessary that society be definitely organized before these rights and duties come into existence. All that is required is a relation between persons expressed by a common nature, a common relation to the world, common ends, and competition for the means of subsistence. Rights may exist even before the social organism has been formed, though they may not be enforced. Moreover, the converse is also true; namely, that the existence of society or of social relations necessarily involves the existence of rights and duties. In these cases we are justified in supposing that duties are determined by rights, and within the sphere expressed by them would not exist but for those rights. This sphere is that of justice, which is still to be considered. For instance, the duty to respect property, to avoid theft, is determined wholly by the previous existence of the right to property. In fact a violation of property claims would be impossible until the right was admitted. Hence such duties have no existence except under the condition of existing rights. If all duties are such as these, they have only a *social* and not a *personal* or *private* object.

The principle thus determined can be expressed in the for-

mula: *the rights of the subject imply the correlate duty in the object when that is a person*, and now the question remains whether the rights of the subject imply any correlative duties in himself. They do not, except as they imply equal rights in others, and thus involve their correlates. Duties in the subject may imply rights, but rights will not imply his duties. Animals and irrational beings are supposed to have rights, but not duties. On the other hand, wherever duties are supposed to exist in rational beings, they determine rights against foreign infringement. This means that liberty must always be subordinated to duty. Indifferent actions, or such as are claimed to be indifferent, must be made to yield to the demands of moral law, and hence duty is superior to rights and not the correlate of them in the subject.

2. **THE APPEAL TO FORCE IN THEIR DEFENSE.**—The existence of a right justifies the use of force to maintain it. If such force could not be exerted, the right would be practically nugatory. The use of force against another must always be regarded as an injury unless it is in defense of a right, and unless, when a right is conceded, we admit the legitimacy of an appeal to force in its defense, the right can only be claimed, but not made effective. Government is founded upon this postulate, and public opinion operates to substitute reason for that appeal. But when it fails, and when the interests of society are great enough to demand it, force must step in to accomplish what reason and public opinion fail to do. Rights are sacred, more sacred than the use of force is objectionable, and this because they are complicated with a system of duties which command the highest attainments possible in the individual. Hence in order to maintain them the employment of force must be the correlative of their existence. On any other terms the use of force is an evil to be repressed.

**4th. Divisions of Rights.**—Rights are divided into two great classes, *Natural* or *Personal*, and *Acquired* or *Political* rights, according as they represent conditions fixed by nature, or conditions determined by society. Natural rights are those possessed

*against* others, and acquired rights are those obtained *from* others. The former has fewer limitations than the latter, depending less upon the degree of responsibility possessed than upon the organic nature of the subject. They might also be called *individual* in contrast with social rights. But probably the terms adopted are better. By natural rights, however, we do not mean anything like the doctrine of Rousseau and the eighteenth-century philosophers who talked so effectively about "the rights of man" and "natural rights." These writers were individualists, pure and simple, and maintained that rights were endowments belonging to man by nature and not a mere expression of what was implied in his social relations. But by natural rights we mean here nothing more than claims upon others, which are conferred by nature, if you like, but are wholly the product of social conditions and must vanish with them. They are called "natural" because they are not conferred by convention or legislation, but arise from relations which exist independently of the conventional relations of society. They are natural in the sense that they are not conferrable by law, but exist by virtue of the individual's relation to his own nature and actions. The acquired rights are conferred by social action on the ground of certain qualifications. They are more distinctly subordinated to the will and wants of public welfare. The following is a tabular view of rights, without distinction between social and individual or moral:

Rights	Natural (Personal)	Personal Existence = Life	{ Personal Security. Self-defense.
		Personal Activity = Liberty	{ Labor. Enjoyment, etc.
		Personal Property = Products of Will	{ Material Products = Wealth.
			{ Intellectual Products = Knowledge. Moral Products = Character.
	Acquired (Political)	Natural Property = Natural Resources or Land = A Trust.	
		Elective Franchise = Sovereign Powers.	
		Public Office = Representative Powers.	

This classification may not be exhaustive in regard to particular rights, but it contains them by implication. The right to justice, for instance, will be included in the various rights to security, wealth, knowledge, character, and liberty, they being forms in which it is realized. Indeed, we might even summarize all natural rights in the conception of justice, but it is best to differentiate them in the manner represented by the table. We may now consider each class by itself.

1. NATURAL RIGHTS.—By natural rights we mean *those which are determined by the constitution of the subject, its necessary demands, and their relation to others*. Man is an organic whole consisting of physical and mental characteristics, each of which demand certain supplies of energy in their support and development. His appetites and capacities seeking for development are impulses which are not of his own making, and in order to maintain his own self-preservation and to accomplish the end of his existence he must be granted the opportunity to meet his necessary wants. They are not of his own creation. His duties lie in the direction of perfecting himself, not to say anything of the interest to do so, which is the same in all persons. Hence with a nature and wants not of his own making and a demand for self-realization, he can claim from others the recognition of powers and liberty which he accords to them. This claim is his right by nature, not a right against nature and in relation to the physical world alone, but a right fixed by his own nature in relation to his equals. For instance, the right to personal existence is determined by the demands of duty and interest upon self-protection. Were his personal existence indestructible he would have no right to preserve it, because there would be no possibility of annihilating it. A right is the privilege of defense against injury and of liberty in action; or we might say that it is an indispensable means to the maintenance of an end which cannot produce itself. Hence, wherever man's nature makes it necessary to do certain acts protecting his physical and moral integrity, he will have a claim upon the respect and toleration of others to the extent of granting equal rights to them.

They are all claims *against* interference or censure from others, with the limitations already discussed. But there is one important limitation still to be considered. It is the forfeiture of a right by the violation of it in others. Rights are not so absolute, even if they are natural, that they cannot be forfeited. They are all forfeitable when they are claimed or usurped against the equal rights of others. Hence they are not so sacred as the object for which man exists and are wholly subordinated to it. They exist as consequences of man's nature, and must harmonize with the ultimate object of that nature, though they are socially determined as we have already shown. Each of them may be considered briefly, with the particular principle upon which it depends.

(a) *The Right to Personal Existence or Self-preservation.*—It is clear that this is not a right against nature, because no man has the power to maintain it, except for a time. But it is determined negatively by the consideration that if it is not granted, social order is impossible. We have to choose between social order and denying the right of self-preservation. As long as the former is a desirable object, not to say anything of the continuance of the species, the right of self-preservation must be conceded as a condition of its attainment. The positive defense of the right is the duty to realize the best possible objects within the reach of the will, assuming, of course, that there are duties of any kind. It is a right, however, too generally admitted and too well fortified by the necessities of life to require any fuller justification. This is not so true of the next two rights.

(b) *The Right to Personal Activity or Liberty.*—This right is a corollary of the first. Self-preservation and the attainment of the objects of life require such immunity in conduct as will make them possible. The imposition of unfair restrictions upon the will must defeat them, and hence that liberty must be guaranteed which will enable the subject to pursue the highest aims of life, be they happiness, perfection, or other ends. This will be a condition both of his doing it and of being virtuous out of

his own volition. The only limitation is the equal rights of others and the duties of the subject. Its sphere is all moral and indifferent actions, individual and social. Man has some end to realize whether it be obligatory or indifferent. In case it is obligatory, nothing can be clearer than his right to pursue it untrammelled by foreign infringement. He has faculties adjusted to certain desirable or imperative ends, and hence it is either his duty or his interest to exercise them. That it is his duty to exercise them is apparent from the fact that what we call punishment or evil consequences attach to the neglect of that exercise. "But the fulfillment of this duty (or interest) necessarily presupposes freedom of action. Man cannot exercise his faculties without certain scope. He must have liberty to go and to come, to see, to feel, to speak, to work; to get food, raiment, shelter, and to provide for each and all of the needs of his nature." His right, therefore, is only a legitimate claim upon others' forbearance and protection, provided he accords the same to them.

Aside from this general deduction of liberty as an abstract right there are other considerations that enhance its value and justify its protection. Among the most important is the fact that, with due prevention of crime, endowment of personal liberty not only insures better moral character when attained at all, and even conditions it, but it also opens the way to a larger voluntary supply of the world's wants in goods. Every man works harder, produces more, and is more content when his activity is free and voluntary. A labor of love always effects more than one of drudgery, and hence apart from its abstract necessity for the sake of consistency it comes to us justified by expediency. It supplies the largest possible amount of human wants whether they be expressed in terms of happiness, perfection, or material wealth. It is the best condition for meeting the demands of natural selection and directing the natural inclinations in the channel in which they will be most useful and productive. Hence it applies with equal force to every form of activity, physical, intellectual, and moral. Its corollaries,



therefore, are freedom of labor, freedom of avocation or employment, freedom of trade, freedom of opinion, freedom of conscience. All these have vindicated themselves by the results of experience, though they have been of slow growth. They mark the efforts to secure justice and equality and are conditions of them, assuming the proper circumstances.

But there are limitations to the granting of the right to liberty which are distinct from the equal rights of others. This latter is a formula which applies strictly to a world in which all are equal in powers, desires, and character. But the fact is that we find very great inequalities in men. They are unequal in their physical, mental, and moral endowments. They are particularly unequal in moral character, which makes the conferral of liberty upon them dangerous. Consequently there is no definite criterion of the amount of liberty which it is safe to confer, except what the degree of power, culture, and morality may justify. The right, therefore, has degrees, or must be determined by the probabilities of its use or abuse. It is forfeitable as are all others, and requires certain stages of individual perfection and social development to secure it against easy forfeiture. Criminals and the insane are illustrations of its forfeiture, the one for moral and the other for natural defects. But besides forfeiture for defects, it may be limited by age and education, even when there are no traces of criminality or insanity. Thus it is a right wholly subordinated to the ethical ends of society, and determines duties in others only in proportion as the subject respects it as a moral qualification and opportunity to serve those ends of his own will.

(c) *The Right to Personal Property.*—By personal property I shall mean that which is the product of a man's own effort or labor. It is illustrated in man's implements and all objects of manufacture in which the value is increased over and above its raw or natural worth by the labor bestowed upon them. I shall therefore distinguish sharply between *personal* and what I shall call *natural* property. The distinction is usually between *personal* and *real* property, in which "real" property denotes im-

movable objects, including tenements as well as land or natural resources. But in the conception here advanced "personal" property includes houses and tenements as products of human labor, and so represents a value derived therefrom. Lands or natural resources, however, do not derive their properties or value from human labor in the first instance, and hence must stand upon a different footing in the doctrine of rights. The distinction in positive law, affecting matters of transfer and criminality, is between movable and immovable property. But in ethics the doctrine of rights requires us to draw it at another point, and hence an extension of the term "personal" and the substitution of "natural" for "real." By "natural" property, however, I shall not mean that what a man has by nature, but only that the objects represented by it are natural in contrast with artificial objects, "personal" referring to the latter, and the former denoting what are called natural resources, such as lands, mines, water-power, forests, etc. With this distinction made clear in this manner, we may turn to the consideration of personal property and its possession as a natural right. The question of land will come up under political rights.

That personal property is held by a natural as opposed to a political right, and without any claims of society upon it, except under limitations to be considered again, will be apparent from *the law of desert* in human conduct and the corollary implied by it. This is the deepest law of the moral world. It asserts or implies *that every man ought to receive the benefits and to bear the evil of his own actions*. The organization of rewards and penalties in civil society proceeds wholly upon this principle. Morality and its judgments of approval and disapproval do the same. Indeed, morality could not exist without it. Now, it is simply a special application or corollary of this law to say that *every man is entitled to the benefits or results of his own labor*. To deny this is to deny the law of desert, which denial would defeat all morality. Hence, on the principle of desert, we can affirm that a man has a natural right to the results of his own activity or labor. If he has not this right, social order is not possible, and

no claim whatever can be made to the products of will, though we have supposed in the interest of self-preservation and self-realization that a man has a right to liberty. Unless a man can be entitled to the results of his labor or activity, the right to liberty is wholly useless and nugatory. The use of what a man produces by his own exertion is essential to every object imposed by obligation and legitimate self-interest, so that a man must come by it on the ground of natural rights. It is not anything which can be wholly separated from the man, even when the public good requires the abridgment of the right. Support and protection are still claimable, and must be substituted for the restrictions upon the abuses of it. But where incapacity does not unfit the subject for liberty, the right is wholly exempt from limitations, except those that are most general. It simply follows from the assumed liberty of volition and carries with it the claim to every intended result of that act.

To illustrate, a man who makes a hoe, a shovel, a reaper, or implement of any kind whatever, a house, a piece of cloth, or produces articles of food, has an unquestioned right to their ownership and use. No one else can claim them, though humanity may require the sacrifice of them; not on the ground of rights, but on the ground of duties. They are simply the materialized or objective will of the subject and as much his own as his volitions. The whole social and economic fabric is founded upon the principle, and to infringe it is to destroy that fabric by discouraging or nullifying the springs of activity and to grant to the non-workers and indolent freedom to enjoy what they do not produce. It is, therefore, absolutely indispensable to civilization, which is the survival of the morally fittest, even if that moral quality does not extend beyond the possession and exercise of prudence.

But there are two important considerations in connection with this right which modify the naked and absolute assertion of it. The first is a limitation to the use or exchange of such property, governed by the right of the community to security against unfair treatment in trade. The right to the ownership of such

goods and their use for personal purposes may be granted to almost any extent, but the right to prey upon others' necessities by unfair enhancement of values must be abridged. That is, monopolies, even of such products, are inconsistent with the equal rights of others. But this is because of the second consideration. The second fact, therefore, is that the value of every product is compound, a union of the natural and the artificial values. Every article of a material kind represents the value which nature supplies and that which labor creates. It is difficult to fix absolutely the proportions of these, but the fact that both exist and are at least approximately determinable fixes a limit to the individual's control over the product of his labor. He is absolutely entitled only to the value which his labor creates, and that is not always easily assignable, while the value which nature and human wants give it are not his individual property at all. In character, and perhaps knowledge, the whole value belongs to the producer. In objects of physical manufacture this is not so, and hence monopolies either of natural or manufactured products are subject to social regulation and only the results of the individual's labor can be claimed as his own. The only practical difficulty is to determine how much this is.

It will be apparent from the principles here presented that current discussions about the right to private property too frequently fail to distinguish between personal and natural property, and also to recognize the effect of natural values complicated with the artificial in modifying the right to personal property in the concrete, where the product is conceived to have been wholly created by the subject's action. Hence there is much confusion on both sides of the controversy about Socialism. This doctrine generally appears opposed to private property, and is so in regard to land or natural resources. This antagonism is construed as an opposition to all private property. But in fact Socialism cannot stand without admitting the right to what I have called personal property. This is essential to its very existence. But what the Utopian in that field never perceives is that his theory is too broad to be ethical and so contradicts itself, and takes no

account of those moral, intellectual, and physical qualities in men which affect the values of their productions and prevent the equality of possession and control which it is the aim of an ideal society under ideal conditions to establish.

2. **POLITICAL RIGHTS.**—Political rights are characterized by more distinct limitations than personal rights. The reason is that they are claims *from* others on the ground of moral qualifications for performing social duties, instead of claims *against* others on the ground of liberty in actions not affecting others. This peculiar difference between the two classes has already been mentioned. But there is also the fact to be noticed that political rights are based upon two characteristics: the first is man's duty to the commonwealth and the second his capacity for serving it. The absence of either characteristic puts an end to the enjoyment of the right, the conditions of incapacity being determinable by law. They are all conferred upon individuals only upon the condition of fitness to use them, and the criterion for this is primarily the age of majority, but modified by other considerations as the trust involved is more important. Each of them may be briefly considered.

(a) *The Right to Natural Property.*—We have already distinguished between private property in land or natural resources (land being the economic term for the latter) and property in one's own productions, and it remains to show that the two rights are different from each other, the latter being subject to more decided limitations than the former, if not in actual law, certainly in the ethics of the matter. The one reason that the individual cannot claim the right to property in land is that he has not created its utility, which is mainly the measure of its social value. The principle that a man is entitled to the intended result of his own action involves also the fact that a man cannot claim a value which he has not produced. If he could claim this, there would be no security for even personal property. Hence a man can lay no personal claim to natural resources beyond that which his social relations procure for him. All natural property or land belongs to society; that is, men as an aggregate of persons,

and no one individually has more right to it than another. The fact that all have an equal right to it takes it out of the category of personal property, where only the producer has a legitimate claim upon it, and makes it the joint possession of society, and dedicates it to the moral ends of the race rather than of the individual against the race.

This doctrine would seem to be the socialistic view. But such an interpretation of it would be a mistaken one. Socialism generally assumes that land, at present, is not in possession of the state, and maintains that it should be transferred to the state. The doctrine here advanced is that it is at present fully owned by the state as a *natural* right, but granted to the individual as a *political* right, as a measure of expediency for securing the greatest possible amount of production. The proofs that the state actually owns all natural resources consist in the following facts: (a) The right of confiscation for public purposes; \* (b) the reversion of intestate lands to the state; (c) the existence of common lands which no one can appropriate; (d) state control and distribution of unappropriated lands, as the homestead law in the United States. These facts show that natural resources are actually owned and controlled by the state at present rather than absolutely by the individual. What we call private property in land is in reality simply a *social policy by which the state distributes the responsibility for production among its citizens instead of assuming all of it to itself*. This policy represents several characteristics, which constitute all that the institution of private property in land practically means: (a) Security of tenure; (b) encouragement and protection of improvements; (c) exemption from political responsibility for poverty; (d) the distribution of political and social pressure in determining the amount of pro-

\*The fact that personal property in the form of houses, etc., can be confiscated is no objection to the force of this argument, because it is the fact of immobility that necessitates the taking of it when land is taken. Were houses and tenements movable, like implements, they would not be confiscable. Chattels, knowledge, and character, all personal property, are not confiscable, showing that the principle holds good.

duction. Private property in land is simply a political expedient for accomplishing these ends, and some such measures would have to be adopted no matter what term we employed to express the abstract rights of the system, and hence the controversy should not be regarding Socialism or the nationalization of land, because it is necessarily that already, but regarding the best means of realizing the moral purposes of society. The right is purely subordinate to these.

(b) *The Right to the Elective Franchise.*—This right can be disposed of very briefly. It is the right to participate in the functions of government. That it is a political and not a natural right is proved by the facts, (a) that it is conditioned by the age of majority; (b) that a period of residence is imposed upon foreigners before obtaining the right; (c) that it is forfeited by crimes when this forfeiture is not a *necessary* consequence of punishment; (d) that it is limited to one sex. Its political character is so evident that there would be no reason to mention it, except for the very common tendency to speak of it as a natural right, and to distribute it without reference to the welfare of society. Questions like that of universal suffrage and that of its extension to women are to be settled solely by questions of political expediency. They should be limited or extended according to qualifications. Fitness to fulfill social duties and to aid in government should be the criterion of the right.

(c) *The Right to Office.*—This is the right to perform the functions of government, and its determining principle ethically is fitness, but politically it is the choice of the electorate. It has more distinctive limitations than the other political rights. The three rights are differently distributed, that to property in land having the widest distribution, being conferred in the interest of economic production. The right to the franchise is limited to those qualified by supposition to participate in government indirectly, and is conferred in the interest of defense against arbitrary power. The right to office, or to exercise the *direct* functions of government, is limited to the fewest possible individuals in order to avoid the inconvenience of democratic abuses, and supposes

higher moral qualifications than either of the other political rights.

**III. THE GROUND OF RIGHTS.**—In determining the *ground* of rights we intend to consider more than the mere relation of one person to another with their common relation to nature. We have to consider the nature of the subject of them at the same time. A right when possessed is the property of the man, and the question is whether there is any peculiar element of his nature other than his equality with others that determines the existence of his rights. We have supposed that B's duties are determined by A's rights, and that wherever a right exists in one person it indicates a correlative duty in others to respect it. This seems to make rights prior in nature to duties, so that moral obligation does not seem to extend beyond the social claims of others upon the subject, and thus rights seem to be without an ethical ground. There is reason to think, however, that the problem is not so simple, and that the ultimate ground of rights is either a duty somewhere or the value of personality. It cannot be a mere relation between two living beings, because if it were, all animal life could be said to have the same rights as man, both in relation to man and in relation to each other. Hence, we must seek some more fundamental principle as the determining basis of rights.

In order to accomplish this most effectively we must turn again to the divisions of rights and reconsider them briefly, adding a class which has not been mentioned, but which it is important to notice. We shall, therefore, divide all rights into *animal* and *human* rights. It is the latter class which we have considered, and which were divided into natural and acquired rights. We shall now need to take account of the division of natural into *social* and *individual* or *moral* rights. Social rights cover actions that are *socially* indifferent, actions that are not in conflict with the welfare of others. Individual or moral rights cover actions that are either *individually* indifferent or are personal duties. We have, then, four classes of rights to consider in determining whether duties are the basis of all or of only a part of rights, or



whether they condition any rights at all. This difference in the kind of rights will make some difference in the statement of the case, as they are somewhat differently related to the fundamental principles which determine them. We have, then, to repeat, four divisions of rights to consider in ascertaining their relation to morality. They are animal rights, and of human rights there are the social, the individual, and the political. Now for their relation to duty and morality.

**1st. Relation of Rights to Morality.**—We take, first, the political rights. These undoubtedly have a moral basis, in the broadest sense of that term; for they depend upon the possession of certain moral qualifications, though these are or may be nothing more than mature intelligence and prudence. They are not claims which the individual can assert on the ground of his mere humanity. A man must be sane and capable of self-control in order to secure political rights. This is because a political right carries with it or implies a duty to others. The ability to perform these duties, which is only to say that the moral capacity for doing certain services to others and protecting oneself is a condition to the conferral and enjoyment of political rights. If this capacity does not exist, then such rights are not granted; instance imbeciles, the insane, and criminals. Hence it is apparent that duty to society and to self, which exists only where there is capacity or the moral nature to realize it, is the condition of one class of rights.

The actual practice of politics may confer them upon certain individuals who do not deserve them. But men are quick to perceive that such persons *ought not* to receive them. This is only an indirect proof of the claim here made, and an ideal society would define their limitations more strictly in order to meet the case. But even in our defective social organization we draw the line somewhere and recognize the moral qualifications conditioning political rights, though we are somewhat lax in our judgment as to what constitutes moral qualifications.

The deduction of individual or moral rights is not so easy. We have defined them as denoting exemption from censure.

Broadly speaking, we are in the habit of saying that a man has a right to do what is not wrong, and we include both social and individual actions. But limiting ourselves to individual conduct, that which is not wrong includes two distinct classes of actions, duties and indifferent actions. Hence, to affirm a right is to assert the claim to liberty in the case of indifferent actions, free choice without censure for either alternative, and the claim to immunity in the exercise of duty, though not the liberty of exemption from obligation which we possess in the case of indifferent actions. The one is the right to perform personally indifferent actions, and the other is the right to perform personal duties. Each of these must be considered separately, as the term "right" has not exactly the same import in both cases.

First, the right to perform personal duties is beyond dispute founded upon the possession of these duties. It is primarily a right against the infringement of conscience by others. If the duties did not exist, the right to perform them would not exist, unless the actions were socially indifferent. How far and in what sense socially indifferent actions exist and condition rights will be determined again. But it is clear that an individual duty carries with it a right of performance against all claims of society, though no individual duties exist which can conflict with others' rights. This, however, is because others can have no rights where the individual has personal duties. If they had such rights then the sacrifice of personal duties could be commanded. The whole doctrine regarding the freedom of conscience is an embodiment of the principle that a certain class of rights are dependent upon obligations. The right is a twofold one; first, a claim for liberty against infringement, and second, a claim of the rightness of the action involved, which is one of the implications of the term rights, though applicable only where duties exist and because of those duties. This is one of the peculiar and significant ambiguities of the term, which connects it with duties, on the one hand, and impedes the reduction of its meaning to morality, on the other, unless an indirect connection

with duty can be ascertained. This will be determined by the answer to the question whether rights covering *indifferent* actions are conditioned by duties.

It must be frankly conceded that the moral deduction of rights in indifferent actions is not so easy. We shall have to distinguish between those that are socially and those that are personally or individually indifferent in order to conduct the argument more effectively, though some statements may be made without the distinction. In the first place, indifferent actions are supposed to be without moral quality and unaccompanied by an obligation to perform them. They receive their name for this very reason. But it is to be remembered that the extent of this field may be very much exaggerated. In the first place, it may be questioned whether there are any indifferent actions. It may be a name for merely imaginary actions. Some have maintained that all conduct must be either good or bad, and that every man has to choose between duty and sin. If this be true, rights can exist only in the sphere of duties; for wrong excludes rights of all kinds, so that the term rights covers the negative of all that is wrong, and if there were any indifferent actions they would be included in it. The denial of indifferent actions is certainly more defensible in the case of the individual than in that of society, for every action exercises more or less influence upon the individual agent, but may often be wholly unrelated to others. In the second place, if there are any actions indifferent to the welfare or interests of others than those who do them, this is a fact which eliminates all claims of others to interfere with liberty of volition, as by supposition no duty exists in others to interfere with them. In looking at both aspects of the problem we do not think it necessary to wholly deny the existence of indifferent actions. We believe that many actions are socially indifferent; that is, involve neither good nor evil consequences upon others, though in this highly complex civilization they are much less numerous than in the earlier ages of history. Economic and political solidarity, caused by the present industrial system, with its railways, telegraphs, marine service, division of labor, large

and concentrated capital, and the mutual dependence upon each other involved in them, have given many actions a consequence which they would not possess in the earlier ages of man's development. The sphere of indifferent actions, therefore, socially considered, and hence of rights independent of duties, has been very much abridged.

Now, assuming that there are no indifferent actions socially considered, the sphere of duties and rights would coincide, and it might be asserted that others' rights are conditioned by my duties toward them growing out of my relation to them, instead of making my duties the correlative of their rights. This position is quite as rational as to condition my duties upon their rights, and the same principle might hold true to that extent to which I can be said to have duties toward others, whether there are indifferent actions or not. In fact it is possible, if not necessary, to maintain that the only reason for making rights apparently prior to duties—that is, conditional of duties in others—is that it is a convenient way to justify the application of force for sustaining them, while apart from legal and political necessities my duties to others and their moral personality may be the real ground of their rights. But the admission of socially indifferent actions and the supposition that rights exist with these when the subject has no duties regarding them, would do much to nullify all attempts to deduce rights from the existence of duties, and hence if successful at all we must turn elsewhere for an ethical deduction of rights.

While it may be true that there are many socially indifferent actions, the same assertion may not be made of individual actions, or such as have their consequences for the subject alone. It is at least possible to maintain that every action has a nearer or remoter interest for the subject, so that none can be wholly indifferent to his good. If this be true, the choice can only be between the right and the wrong, so that the sphere of rights and duties would coincide, the former being determinable by the latter, or at least possibly so. It is true that some, or even many, actions may be indifferent to certain ends, assumed to be

paramount to all others. But this does not make them wholly indifferent to the moral personality of the subject, to whom all actions must have some reference for good or ill, directly or indirectly, proximately or remotely, so that the moral life is concerned in them and must determine rights to the extent to which that personality can make claims upon the respect of others. The duties of that personality—that is, his debts to the moral law—will depend somewhat upon the subject's nature and environment, and hence a grant of liberty involving rights will be necessary on the ground of personal worth to the extent to which they do not conflict with the equal rights of others. But as long as we are supposing that the actions are socially indifferent, the question of social limitations will not enter, and the concession of both moral and social rights must be made on the ground of personality with its implied duties, which may be of both a superior and inferior imperativeness. If, then, we find that there are really no actions that are personally or individually indifferent, but only of varying degrees of importance to the person concerned, we are obliged to take account of that importance in considering his rights, which will be determined wholly by the moral value we attach to him as a man and as a part of the social system to which he belongs. While a man's social duties, therefore, are determined by the rights of others, at least as construed by the body politic, both his social and moral rights may be determined by his own duties, not to others, but to the moral law, so that rights in the last analysis would have an ethical basis.\*

It must be granted, however, that this conclusion will not appear so clear, if it be supposed that there are such things as

\*The difficulty in supposing that rights are ever founded upon duties comes wholly from the tendency to give the idea of duty nothing but a social content. It is true that it has this meaning in the majority of the incidents of life, but it also expresses the absolute imperative implied by the highest good, and so gives the notion of moral necessity priority to that of rights, which are purely social in the sense that only duties exist in a state of isolation. Distinguish, then, between personal and social duties and an ethical basis of rights becomes possible.

absolutely indifferent actions, both personally and socially considered. For, if absolutely indifferent actions exist and rights cover them, as they cover all that is *not wrong*, duty would not seem to be their ground. This is clear from an analysis of the two conceptions. Rights imply liberty, *impunitive choice*; duties imply moral necessity, *non-impunitive choice* (freedom of will still consisting with it). The distinction, then, would seem to be that while duties may condition rights against others' infringement, rights may still exist where specific duties in reference to the same actions do not exist. The same conclusion is confirmed by the doctrine of animal rights and the rights of the defective classes among men, such as the insane and imbecile. Neither animals nor the insane and imbecile can be said to have duties, and yet they are said to have rights. The fact in this instance is very strong for a non-ethical basis for rights.

But an argument may be forthcoming which is of considerable significance. If it can be made out that irresponsible beings obtain their rights from the relation which their superiors sustain to the moral law, it would seem that they are thus indirectly traceable to duty, though not the duty of the subject of those rights. It might be maintained that the rights of animals and irresponsible persons are not strictly rights at all, and if this be admissible the relation of rights to moral personality would be quite definitely settled. But usage is too well established to evade the issue in this way and such rights must have a deduction. We have already alluded to the possibility of deducing all rights from the duties of one person to another, reversing the order of dependence usually assumed, which grows or may grow out of the political necessity of enforcing a duty in protection of a right where that duty is not appreciated or efficient. At the same time such a doctrine must assume certain qualities in the subject of rights which are equally their condition along with the duties that others owe them. But it does not admit that rights can originate wholly apart from a relation to duty somewhere. At any rate, it must be clear, that irresponsible

beings, whether animal or human, can have no rights *except in relation to rational beings who have duties*. They have no rights in relation to each other, and it is equally true that rational beings have, strictly speaking, no rights, but only power against all non-moral and irresponsible forces; that is, no rights in any sense that they can exact a duty of irrational agencies. Hence in both of these it is apparent, first, that whatever rights are attributed to animals and non-rational beings, are determined by their relation to those who are subject to the moral law, and second, that personality is the condition of such rights as rational beings can claim against each other. If, then, a duty in the subject of rights does not always determine them, a relation to duty in moral agents will be indispensable to their existence at all. Such a conclusion will apply to indifferent actions, social or personal. If they are personally indifferent, their value as conditions of personal freedom, which is important in self-development, establishes a right against others on the ground of their general duty belonging to the personality of the subject. This is more especially true of socially indifferent actions, which may never be personally indifferent. Though such rights are borrowed, as it were, from the duties of others to the subject of them, they prove that there is no possibility of rights without rationality and moral law somewhere, and that suffices to give rights an ethical basis. We may, therefore, examine the specific characteristics with their implied relation to moral beings, which determine the existence of rights.

**2d. Specific Grounds or Basis of Rights.**—The establishment of a general moral basis for rights was accomplished only by assuming different points of view for the various kinds of rights. We found that the duties of the subject did not determine all of his rights, and that if they existed without the presence of duties some other ground would have to be determined unless we could find a relation to the duties of others as a basis for rights. This necessitated the recognition of more than one element in the problem, and implied that the ground for some rights might be found in the nature of the subject, and some in

the nature of the person who is called upon to respect them ; always, however, in some relation to the moral law as a fundamental condition of them. Hence in selecting the particular characteristics which determine rights, or are one element of them, we must recognize the complex or synthetic nature of their ground and distinguish between the *subjective* and the *objective* conditions of rights. Each of these will be briefly considered.

1. SUBJECTIVE CONDITIONS OF RIGHTS.—By subjective conditions of rights we mean those characteristics which are found in the subject of rights and which are their primary conditions. Beings having these characteristics, other things being equal, will be entitled to rights of some kind, though they are variously related to the moral law. These characteristics are as follows :

(a) *Sensibility*.—Sensibility entitles the subject of it to such rights as exemption from unnecessary pain or cruelty. Beings possessing this alone have not the rights we attribute to rational creatures, because they seem in no way an end to themselves, and yet the moral law commands that they be respected to the extent that they are subjects of pain. This represents the field of animal rights, and it applies to the sensible sphere of all beings. The moral ground, of course, is the duty of others to avoid causing unnecessary pain. Hence it is not the mere possession of sensibility that determines them, but this in relation to the moral personality of others. But without this characteristic no relation to the moral law in others would determine them. But wherever we find sensibility to pleasure and pain with this relation, we affirm the existence of rights as a mode of protection against unpunished infringement. Hence the term applies to animals to whom duty does not apply.

(b) *Personality*.—By personality we mean those distinctive qualities which constitute the higher nature of man and elevate him above the mere brute. We may summarize them in intellectual and moral capacity or rationality in the highest and most comprehensive sense of the term. This is usually assumed



to constitute a person who is entitled to respect on account of intrinsic qualities, not usable merely as a means to an end. The completion of personality will involve both intelligence and moral capacity, the latter being required to condition all rights above the grade of the animal and defective classes. What we have called moral rights will be absolutely conditioned by this characteristic. The conditioning power of personality is peculiar when compared with sensibility, in the fact that it produces that worth in the subject which determines the existence of moral rights, not merely the right to others' respect, but the right to the impunities of conscience and the right, in the sense of the righteousness, of protection against the aggression of foreign forces, whether personal or impersonal. But aside from this, it is a characteristic which places in the subject the same reason for the existence of rights as is found in other personalities for the existence of duties. That is to say, personality determines duties, and these will determine rights more conclusively than mere sensibility, and determine them in a way in which they are not merely a reflex of others' duties to the moral law.

2. OBJECTIVE CONDITIONS OF RIGHTS.—The relative import of the term rights in every application except that denoting the rightness of the actions coming under the protection of that idea, makes it necessary to recognize other conditions besides the sensibility and personality of the subject. Inasmuch as rights are claims against the interference of others who are presumably able and obliged to respect them, they cannot strictly be said to exist unless those conditions exist which make that duty possible. Hence, conditions independent of the subject are necessary for the existence and determination of rights. There are two of these conditions.

(a) *Relation to Moral Personality.*—Before any being, whether rational or irrational, can properly be said to have rights, there must exist moral persons or agents to whom it is related. The two must exist in a social relation, or in some relation involving more or less of a common reference to nature and its resources. As rights are claims of immunity against foreign infringement,

some agent must exist of whom it is rational to expect a regard to such a claim. If that agent does not exist, if there are no rational beings other than the subject of the rights supposed, there is no reason to speak of rights at all. There are only creatures with powers under this assumption and the only relation is that of physically superior and inferior. Hence, in spite of being either sensible or rational, quite as important a condition to the subject is the fact that there should be moral persons to whom that subject shall be related in some way. This is clear from the fact that the animals have no rights in relation to each other, and that man has no rights in relation to animals. But as soon as either of them come into a social relation to man, or other men, the possession of rights originates. The duty or duties which such persons owe either to those of their own kind or to the moral law which condemns all unnecessary infliction of pain, or waste of life, even when nothing but the lower animals are involved, comprehends the right of others to protection against aggression, not necessarily on account of their own inherent worth, but on account of the worth of the moral law.

(b) *The Liberty and Responsibility of Such Persons.*—It is not enough that other persons than the subject should exist and be in a certain relation to those who are supposed to have rights; that is, a territorial or social relation; but those who are supposed to have rights must not in any of their relations and conduct endanger the life or stand in the way of the legitimate development of those who are supposed to owe them duties. The persons who are to confer and respect these rights must have a duty to the beings concerned and must not have their liberty infringed by circumstances which make defensive action necessary against possible or actual aggression. In this way we find a relation to moral law somewhere absolutely necessary to rights; a basis is gained for making man's duties more than a hypothetical obligation to respect rights which without such a basis would at best represent nothing but an optional end and emancipate conscience the moment that it discovered such lib-

erty as making rights ultimate would imply. We next take up duties.

**III. THE NATURE OF DUTIES.**—The doctrine of rights has shown us that duty is not merely a correlative of them, but may also express moral imperatives beyond the sphere of rights and representing moral claims upon conscience which would be valid independent of social conditions. We have now to examine the nature and ground of such obligations. They represent those actions which the moral law makes necessary, and hence in the idea will be found the full import of ethics and its distinction from the object of all other sciences and interests. If duties do not exist, there can be no such a thing as ethics and morality; only liberty to do as we please could be the result of denying the legitimacy of duty and its ultimateness. If it exist, however, and is prior to the existence of rights, and is not resolvable into the merely conditional necessity of adopting a particular means to an optional end, it determines a moral imperative, or is that imperative, which represents one of the sublimest objects of human contemplation, carrying in its contents and meaning the whole destiny of man.

**1st. Definition of Duty.**—We have already seen that the etymological import of the term is that of a debt. This implies that the duty must always be *to* some one, and Mr. Martineau thinks the idea has no meaning except as expressing this relation to another person, divine or human. This may be true for all the social relations of life and for the religious consciousness which involves a relation of man to his Creator, a relation somewhat like that of subject to sovereign. But if we limit its contents to social relations, unless we accepted the existence of God, there would be no reason to suppose a moral imperative binding upon a man apart from a definite social relation to another person. And yet we instinctively feel that a man in his individual capacity *ought* to do certain things whether he accepts religious postulates or not, and without any relation to others; that is, in a state of isolation. To be sure, his responsibilities in such a condition would not be great, because outside the

social state the possibilities of moral attainment might not be very great. But such as they would be, they would have all the imperativeness of duties to others, whether or not there were any influences, internal or external, to make them efficient. That the religious postulate is not absolutely necessary to feeling this imperative is proved by the fact that many feel it who do not accept such a postulate. You may say that the whole objective meaning of duty is lost unless this religious condition be accepted, and this claim may be true. But it does not effect the subjective or psychological presence of duty which is not conditioned by any theoretical ideas whatever. Where it exists at all it is a constitutional part of the subject prior to any theological conception of its ground and meaning, and it is the nature of it as a fact of human consciousness that we are trying to determine, not the object of it or its import relative to other beings. Moreover, to condition its existence upon that of rights would be to eliminate it altogether where rights were not possible, and to make the person a libertine for the lack of a principle to assert the claims of morality. And, again, there could be no individual morality with reference to the subject's own perfection and welfare, if we gave the notion a purely social content. Hence, concluding that it applies in a state of isolation from our fellows and without the prior admission of theological postulates, we must define it as an absolute datum of rational intelligence, not a mere correlate of something that may or may not exist. The widest possible meaning of the term, therefore, is *the feeling of oughtness, that feeling of constraint or respect, necessity or imperativeness, which makes a man responsible for the choice of the ideal*. It is here that it most distinctly contrasts with the idea of rights. Rights imply liberty and impunity in choice, exemption from infringement and censure. Not so the idea of duty. It admits of no exemption from consequences that are not desired by the subject. It permits of no alternatives that will free the conscience from culpability. It holds up but one possibility to the will without suffering for deviation from a moral selection. The will is free to choose under it, but not free to escape

the consequences which it may desire to escape. It is constrained by the ideal to respect it, or to accept certain disagreeable consequences. Hence it expresses no indifference of choice, but imposes a law upon the will which must be either one of respect for the ideal and contempt for its opposite, or one of conflict against natural inclinations. One conception of the term limits it to the notion of a struggle with interest, but another and higher conception of it involves respect for the ideal without any temptation of interest. The former represents a less developed morality and the latter the most highly developed moral consciousness. However, the common conception is that of conflict with interest, and hence it is only in philosophic parlance that it has come to denote reverence for law, where it takes on the proper ethical meaning. It thus expresses moral necessity and limitations, but without the notion of restraint. In other words, it is the sense of moral law, though it assumes two forms, the higher and the lower, reverence for right and the fear of the wrong.

**2d. The Ground of Duty.**—The definition of duties, though it makes them absolute, is only formal and does not indicate the *end* which completes their true meaning. Moreover, the absoluteness of duty, as mentioned, does not imply that no reason can be given for its existence or validity, but only that the idea can not be reduced or resolved into the necessity of choosing certain means to an optional end; as, for instance, the duty to pay for a coat, if I buy it. But it expresses the absence of all alternatives to impulsive selection. Its absoluteness is merely its limitation of the subject to the moral choice in volition. This conception of its absoluteness, therefore, does not prevent us from giving a reason or ground for its existence and validity. As a state of consciousness affecting conduct it always points to an end, and hence it remains to show what object or end gives it the sacredness and imperativeness which it always possesses.

In determining the ground of duty, or all the duties of man, some respect must be paid to the several theories of morality,

which in reality are attempts to assign this very basis. When we ask why such and such an obligation is binding we give some end which the act is to realize, some principle which the act embodies, or the authority of some power over the subject of the duty. Hence we may answer with the utilitarian that this end is happiness, with the formalist that it is conformity to the law of rationality, and with the theologian that it is obedience to the will of God. But we think an answer can be given which evades these several controversies and possibly reconciles them. The ground of obligation, therefore, is one which is identical with perfectionism, though not expressed in the terms of that theory, and is the principle by which Kant supplemented the formal character of his own moral law. This ground we express in the maxim, *Every man should treat his own and the person of others as an end in itself, and not merely as a means*. Personality may be a means to an end, but if conduct be moral it can never use man *merely* as a means. Hence moral law requires respect for the intrinsic worth of rational personality, as an end which need not look beyond itself to some remoter end. That this form of stating the ground of duty is better than that which is expressed in terms of utility or happiness is evident from the fact that we cannot make the happiness or pleasure of others our object without doing more injury than good. We may aim to produce conditions by which they may win their own happiness. But to produce the happiness directly and without their co-operation is simply to multiply inertia and indolence. Hence the proper end of our action toward others, whatever we accept as the motive of our own, is to look at their personality as a whole, not to produce in them mere good feeling. They are to be treated not merely as means to our own ends, but as ends on their own account. We may be influenced by their happiness, but not by that alone. Its complement, perfection, and their person as an end in itself must be considered. On the other hand, this object does not conflict with the theological doctrine. We may refer to the will of God as a reason for obedience, and this will may be one of the *sanctions*, but not the *ground*, of morality. We

may still ask on what ground we should obey this will, and the only final answer that can be given in the case would be the ultimate *end* which such conduct realized. And we could hardly suppose the will of God to be just unless it aimed, in its injunctions, at the perfection and happiness of man; that is, intended that man should treat himself and be treated as an end in himself. Thus the theological point of view in its last analysis would be resolved into the position just maintained, and gets its value solely from being a motive efficient in morality with religious minds where the abstract philosophic statement in which the theological doctrine culminates would present no such power over the will. Hence the only way to state the ultimate ground of duty, free from the confusion of controversy, is to put it in terms of man's intrinsic worth as a person and an end in himself.

**3d. The Divisions of Duty.**—The divisions of duty will manifest the necessity of asserting some such ground for morality as is here presented, while they at the same time evince the fact that the contents of morality are not wholly social. As long as we conceive man as an end in himself, and not merely a means, we are obliged to consider duty as valid outside of social relations, even though many of its contents would be eliminated by a state of individual isolation. But the ultimate principle of duty would still apply by virtue of the moral consciousness of oneself as an end. As in fact, however, we are not independent of social relations, we cannot discard them in our recognition of the nature and extent of obligation. But the two conditions give rise to two distinct classes of duties. One of them is *duties to self*, often called individual duties, but which I prefer to call *personal* duties; the other is *duties to others*, generally called *social* duties. The former I shall subdivide into duties of self-preservation and duties of self-development. The first of them may be called *defensive* and the second *progressive* duties, the latter being farther divided into self-culture and self-control. Social duties may be divided into those representing a regard to rights and those representing a regard to personality apart from rights. I shall dis-

tinguish these two forms as Justice and Benevolence. The following table summarizes this classification :

Duties	Personal	Defensive	{	Life. Liberty. Property.	{	{	The True = Science or Knowledge. The Beautiful = Art or Æsthetics.
		Justice	{	Self-control = The Good = Morality. Legality. Equity.			

In this classification we must not mistake the true meaning of the distinction between personal and social duties. Personal or individual duties express the subject of obligation, but social duties do not imply that society is the subject of them, because society is only an abstraction and is not a person. It is only a name for a collective whole of individuals or persons exercising certain social functions. This being the case it is apparent that *all* duties are individual or personal in respect of the subject of them, and hence the distinction between the two classes is not between the subjects, but between the *objects*, of duty. In personal duties the subject is also their object; in social duties the person having them is the subject and other persons or beings are the objects of them. In personal duties the subject and object are the same; in social duties they are different. This conception of the matter is important in order to obtain a correct view of the methods of moralizing man. In the last analysis the individual subject of duty must be the unit of morality, and any attempt to consider it otherwise only hypostasizes an abstraction.

In this classification also Benevolence has a very comprehensive import. I intend it to express *good will beyond the mere province of rights*. Its full meaning will be made clear in the brief examination of the grounds of social duties.

**4th. The Import of Personal Duties.**—The general ground of duties has been shown to be personality. Of personal duties it



can be expressed in the formula that *every man should treat his own person as an end in itself and not merely as a means*. This conception secures the existence of duty apart from social relations and conditions, and bases it upon the constitutional nature of the subject. Morality thus has a profounder basis than mere rights which may express nothing but the liberty to perform indifferent actions, supposing them to exist. It provides a necessary course of action and ends, while rights imply the choice of any alternative and immunity from infringement or censure.

The only farther question raised by the assertion of personal duties is whether there are any duties which are *only* personal. The fact is that in a social order self-defense and self-development also involve the interests of others to a greater or less extent. This is especially true in our highly complex civilization with its intellectual, social, political, and industrial solidarity of interests. Self-preservation, therefore, is not always a mere duty to self as an end, but may be a duty to others either dependent upon us by virtue of obligations we have ourselves assumed, or for whom we are capable of performing a benevolent service. Self-culture and control may redound both to the benefit of the community and to posterity, who may inherit the results of it. Such being the case personal duties may have a double ground: the first by virtue of a man's duty to his own person, and second, by virtue of the extent to which the welfare of others is involved in the development of the subject's own personality.

**5th. The Import of Social Duties.**—The same general ground applies to social as to personal duties, but it would be formulated with reference to the object of them; thus, *every man should treat the person of others as an end in itself, and not merely as a means*. There is, however, an additional fact which helps to distinguish the ground of social from that of personal duties. Social duties are based upon *rights*, personal duties upon *personality*. There is a still further distinction between the grounds of justice and benevolence which will be considered in its place.

1. JUSTICE.—The conception of justice is a complex one. It

is not always used in the same sense. It will, therefore, be necessary to examine it briefly and to determine the exact scope of its meaning.

(a) *Definition of Justice.*—The meaning of the term was at first quite identical with right or moral. This is especially noticeable in early Greek writers and Plato. The reason for this was the fact that the sphere of morality did not extend beyond social customs and duties, and though Plato proposed a higher foundation for morality than custom, he did not distinguish between personal and social duties, and hence the content of all morality was expressed by justice (*δικαιοσύνη*), which denoted equally personal righteousness and right social conduct or obedience to the laws. Aristotle drew the distinction between *civil* and *moral* justice, by which he meant mere conformity to the law, in the one case, and voluntarily righteous conduct toward others, in the second case. This was practically the distinction between objective or external and subjective or internal morality, though he did not carry the doctrine so far as to recognize personal duties independent of the social. All morality was still social with Aristotle. But the distinction between justice that was enforced by law and justice that was voluntarily done was the inception of the distinction between morality and mere conformity to law, and did much to limit the notion of justice to its modern import of merely correct social conduct.

There is, however, another meaning of the term which has all along accompanied the development of the one just mentioned. It is that which identifies the term with retributive punishment. The same general import is at the basis of this as of the former conception, but it is not noticeable on the surface. But a comprehensive definition must include it. Hence the broadest definition of justice will be that it is *the maintenance of desert*. This comprehensive conception includes respect for rights and the defense of them when violated. The former involves conformity to law and the latter the punishment of its violation. This distinction gives rise to the divisions of justice, which may be briefly considered.

(b) *Divisions of Justice.*—The distinction between justice as respect for rights, whether enforced or voluntary, and the infliction of penalties for infringing rights, is expressed by the division of justice into *Positive* or *Tributive* justice and *Negative* or *Punitive* justice. The former concerns the doing of such actions as others may demand of us, the latter concerns the treatment of wrong actions. The formula for covering both forms of it may be expressed as follows and given the character of a maxim: *Every man should respect and protect rights, so that social wrong may neither be done nor suffered, and that social right may prevail.* Each of these divisions has its sub-divisions according as the justice is determined by forms of conduct, or by forms of punishment. Positive or tributive justice we divide into *Legality* and *Equity*. Legality is mere conformity to positive laws, supposed to express the rights of men, and exempts the subject from legal penalties. Equity is respect for rights apart from and without legal requirement, and represents moral motives in social conduct. It is interesting to observe that there may be a conflict between legality and equity, considered in their objective aspects. Objectively legality is presumptively based upon equity, but positive laws may conflict with strict equity, and hence when this is the case the latter has the binding quality, though there may be nothing to make it effective. They are distinguished, however, in the following manner. Legality exempts from *civil*, and equity from *moral*, penalties. Moreover, legality cannot be more than *objectively* right conduct, equity will be *subjectively* as well as objectively right conduct. Equity is, of course, the object of law, but the casuistry of life and its conditions often makes mere legality a shield for manifold forms of injustice. Hence the value of equity as the basis of justice, or the ideal at which legality is supposed to aim.

The divisions of negative or punitive justice are *Corrective* and *Retributive* punishment. Preventive "punishment" is not included here because it is not when taken alone so much a means of maintaining justice as of defense against injury from every source whatsoever, whether personal or impersonal. Since

it is a measure to protect men against irrational as well as rational beings, it would comprehend more than the maintenance of justice, strictly so called, which is defended in behalf of rights, while rights cannot exist, except in persons, or in a relation to persons. Purely preventive measures, therefore, do not secure justice, but merely protection against injury from superior power. We consequently recognize only two forms of punitive justice. The following table summarizes the divisions of justice :

Justice	Positive	Legality = Conformity to <i>positive</i> law.
		Equity = Conformity to <i>moral</i> law.
	Punitive	Corrective punishment = Reformatory discipline.
		Retributive punishment = Compensatory discipline.

(c) *General Principles of Justice*.—There is a peculiarity in connection with every form of justice which cannot be overlooked. It is based somehow upon the idea of equality, at least, equality of some kind, and yet the recognized inequality of men creates some curiosity to know what equality it is that is embodied in the notion of justice and its implications. The usual doctrine is that all men are equal before the law, and justice is spoken of as regarding all men as equal. The statement, however, is misleading. It is not true that all men are equal either intellectually, morally, or physically, though the law must treat them as equals, if not in one sense, certainly in another. The reason for this is found in the following facts.

Justice is founded upon rights and the duty to respect them. It, therefore, deals with the social relations between men and such actions as affect the welfare of society. Consequently its subject matter is *objective morality*, which is purely a question of external results to men, and is not concerned with motives. To establish and maintain justice is to see that each man's rights are secured and social order preserved, and it matters not what the motives of the agent are in effecting this end. It is the result which is desired, and though it would be morally better if it could be obtained by respect to equity, it is sufficient if it is accomplished only by legality. Now, the attainment of objective

morality does not require equality between men. It is the natural consequence of certain actions without regard to motives or the degree of intelligence. Thus the payment of a debt, the performance of honest conduct, the telling of the truth, or the fulfillment of a promise can each be done by persons of all degrees of moral, intellectual, or physical inequality, though the effects of their actions are equal. It is, therefore, the equality of the effects of men's actions that determines their equality before the law, and no differences can be justly permitted on the ground of social, moral, or other differences. Thus an act of embezzlement by a rich man causes as much evil, or the same consequences, as by a poor man; the effect of not paying a debt is the same whatever the motive, social standing, or commercial ability of the agent; the right to equal wages is determined by equal production or equal services; where services vary wages must vary. The penalties for crime are the same for all persons without distinction of wealth or character, because the injustice done is not affected by these considerations. As an illustration of the same principle it is uniformly recognized that, in theory at least, piece wage is more just than a time wage, because it rewards according to economic services. On the other hand, it no more hinders injustice by the laborer than time wages, as he can "scamp" his work under both systems. In piece wages he can exert himself to increase the quantity of production at the expense of quality and thus increase his wages. This and all industrial phenomena show that the standard of justice in the economic world is equality of services, and injustice is inequality of services, the effect upon individuals not being determined by motives or any other considerations of character whatsoever. Hence the problems of justice, whether positive or punitive, turn about objective morality and are based upon it, where volitions are equal, without regard to conditions of character.

An exception to this is apparent in the case of capital punishment and perhaps a few other penalties, where the distinction of severity is based upon motives and not upon the consequences. Also the modern theory of indefinite periods of confinement for

crime would seem to disregard the criterion of objective consequences altogether and treat men as unequal before the law. Moreover, public and private opinion often proceeds upon distinctions of personal character and merit in the feelings that it exhibits and the distribution of rewards and penalties which it favors. From these facts it would appear that justice, positive and punitive, was not based wholly upon objective consequences.

In reply to this objection, however, it is to be noted that in all instances of economic justice equality of services or of injury is the theoretical and practical standard of judgment. The penalties for every form of dishonesty are the same without distinction of motive, standing, or intelligence. It is the same for every form of ordinary personal injury, and any application of an unequal standard on the ground of wealth, social position, or other qualification is universally condemned as unjust. In the second case we must distinguish between the *basis* and the *object* of justice. If rewards and penalties were purely *compensatory* in their *object*, they would never appear to conflict with the equality demanded in their *basis*. But they are preventive and corrective as well as compensatory, and this fact complicates them with the principles of benevolence, which disregards external considerations, or may do so, and takes account of distinctions in personal worth, or of future possibilities in this respect. Hence the *degree* of punishment, or of limitations to the will, depend upon the extent of the subject's responsibility and the possibility of his regeneration by discipline, but the *kind* of punishment will depend upon the form of injustice committed; that is, the kind of objective conduct and consequences. The same principle is true of rewards. They must be measured by responsibility and capacity to appreciate and use them rightly, though the right to bestow them depends upon objective social relations. This view ought to be apparent from the single fact that no punishment is justifiable unless a social wrong has been committed, no matter what the motives or character of the subject in his conduct. The basis of justice, therefore, will be objective morality, though the object of it will be the reward of personal

merit, on the one hand, and the reformation of the criminal, on the other, a fact which shows that justice has its connections with benevolence though its subject matter and ground are rights and objective morality.

2. BENEVOLENCE.—After what has been said of justice little needs to be said of benevolence. The comprehensive import of the term, however, as here used and more or less contrasted with justice, requires a little attention.

Ordinarily the term is synonymous with charity or kindness to the poor. But we here take it in its broader etymological import to denote *good will* toward man and beast. The term humanity exactly expresses its meaning and is often associated in the same way with the notion of justice. It is, therefore, that respect for personality and sensitive beings which carries moral law and good will beyond the strict limits of either legality or equity and endeavors to overcome some of the inequalities of nature. It is the virtue that characterizes the magnanimity and pity of the strong for the weak, and is a universal duty of those who can avoid the unnecessary infliction of pain, benefit the weak and helpless, or cultivate social relations with equals. It is the one condition of all the higher life of man, and lies at the basis of whatever progress he has ever made in the course of his history.

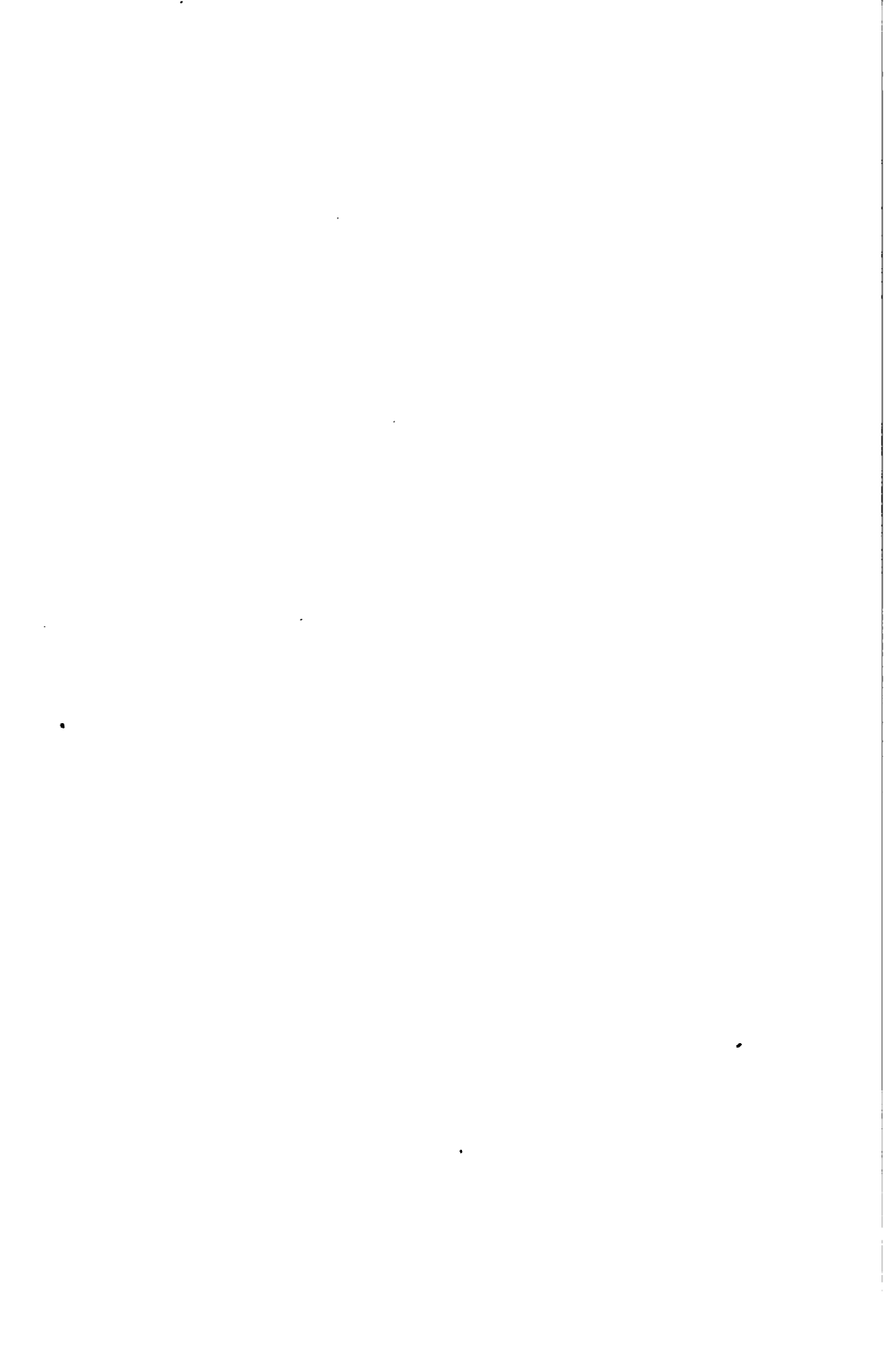
The ethical principle represented by it is found in those duties which are both independent of duties to self and supplementary to those founded upon the rights of other persons. Benevolence, therefore, is founded upon the rights of all creatures as determined by man's duty to the moral law. This, however, is only a way of indicating that it has no foundation except its own worth, and that its object is respect for rights determined by the moral law, rather than by any moral personality in the subject of those rights. In other words, benevolence is not bound by any equality of its objects with the subject of it. And it is farther characterized as a duty which cannot be legally, but only morally, exacted of the individual. The object of it cannot claim any natural right to it. It is a gratuity bestowed according to merit, or according to the subject's capacity and duty to do more for his fel-

lows, when prudent, than social rights may demand. It is, therefore, consistent with every form of inequality and endeavors by good will and sympathy to alleviate the ills and burdens of life. While justice deals with objective data, benevolence deals with the subjective, and acts according to personal worth or merit, or according to the principle of humanity, which endeavors to lessen pain, so far as possible, and to distribute more evenly such as cannot be prevented, while it promotes happiness, or rather the conditions of it, as a means of reducing life's inequalities, especially such as are artificial and due to the complexities of the social organism.

*IV. CONCLUSION.*—The examination of rights and duties leaves us with an interesting result. They are found to have a very complicated relation. On the one hand, the correlation of duties with rights seemed to leave us with a foundation of duty which represented nothing but an optional end to sanctify them, which is equivalent to eliminating moral obligation altogether. On the other hand, duties seemed to have a range of sanctity and urgency that place them above mere impunitive actions, and to represent an imperative function of consciousness that is valid for man when he has no social relations to respect. Then, inasmuch as rights could not exist at all except in relation to personality, which must be the basic principle of ethics, we found a way to place duty, in its most comprehensive import, at the basis of rights, and thus to give them an ethical import which otherwise they would not possess. Duty became the prior and conditioning principle of rights, first of the rights of the subject, and second of the object, or others. Consequently justice and benevolence, as well as the personal virtues, obtained a moral rather than a conventional foundation.

*References.*—Trendelenburg: *Naturrecht*; Spencer: *Social Statics*, pp. 36-68; *id.*, *Principles of Ethics*, Vol. II.; Sidgwick: *The Elements of Politics*, Chapters VIII. and XIII.; Kant: *Metaphysik der Sitten*; Godwin: *Inquiry Concerning Political Justice*, Vol. I., Book II.





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